

THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

No. 11

1940

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No. 11

NOVEMBER

1940

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THE TWENTY-THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

TWENTY-THREE years ago a new page in the history of mankind began to be written: under the leadership of the party of Lenin and Stalin, the Russian workers, in alliance with the poor peasants and with the assistance of the soldiers and sailors, overthrew the rule of the capitalists and landlords, established Soviet power and thus created on one-sixth of the earth the basis for a new, a socialist society.

The great socialist October Revolution broke out during the fourth year of the first imperialist World War. The influence of this war on the life of the peoples, the various classes and each individual was tremendous. The imperialist war had intensified to the utmost all the contradictions of the old, decaying society; it had tied them up into a bloody knot, into a treacherous snare in which humanity was caught. And behold: the sword of the great socialist October Revolution cut this knot.

The victorious October Revolution has led the country out of imperialist war. The consequences of the imperialist World War were frightful: millions had fallen or been wounded. Entire countries had been ravaged and laid waste; famine raged along the fronts and in the rear, and the horrors of a new

winter of war were the immediate prospect. How to escape from this inferno was the question asked by millions upon millions of soldiers, workers, peasants and entire peoples, and first and foremost by the much-tortured peoples of Russia who at that time were under the sway of the capitalists and landlords. There was no lack of false prophets who wanted the masses to believe that there was no other way of escape from the bane of war than "to fight it out till final victory was won." This meant that they should continue to sacrifice their small belongings and their very life blood for the greater glory and greater profits of "their own" imperialists. There were also quite a number of political imposters who would have the people believe that it was possible to "induce" the warring imperialists to abandon their plans of conquest and to conclude a "just peace."

The Bolsheviks alone tirelessly declared that the various countries could not be released from the stranglehold of the imperialist war unless a new class, the class of the proletariat, should gain political power—the class which, because of its social position, is not interested in imperialist conquests. Russia was able to break the chain of im-

perialism, and to make its way out of the imperialist war, because the majority of the Russian people repudiated the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders and firmly took the course indicated by the Bolsheviks.

The overthrow of the capitalists and landlords and the establishment of Soviet power saved the country from catastrophe. The more than three years of war, the defeats at the various fronts, the absolute incompetence of the military and civil leaderships, the unlimited greed of the ruling classes and the fathomless corruption and utter rottenness of the state apparatus all brought about a thorough disorganization of the economic life of the country, a disruption of both the front and the rear. Russia was reduced to the brink of famine. These consequences of a degenerate system were aggravated by the deliberate sabotage of the bourgeoisie, the bureaucracy and the generals who made every effort to drown the growing revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses in all-pervading chaos. To this end the ruling classes also accepted aid from the enemy with whom they secretly conspired and into whose hands these traitors were ready to deliver important centers of the revolutionary proletariat and military positions.

This policy of famine, chaos and catastrophe, of betrayal and foreign invasion could be ended only in the manner proposed by the Bolsheviks: by the overthrow of the gang of capitalists and landlords and the transfer of all power to the Soviets. It is a well-known fact that there

were people who advised the masses to proceed in the opposite direction: to leave the bourgeoisie and the landlords—these organizers of chaos, disintegration, starvation and invasion—at the helm of state and to limit the role of the Soviets to the adoption of resolutions. But it is also a well-known fact that in the end the majority of the Russian people paid no heed to this counsel of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries but resolutely followed the Bolsheviks. This and only this was the way Russia was saved from catastrophe and invasion.

The victorious socialist revolution gave the peasants of Russia the estates of the tsar, the landlords and the church. Despite the tremendous extent of Russia with its huge areas of fertile soil, the land famine of her peasantry under the tsar was greater than anywhere else, the survivals of feudalism and serfdom exceeding those of any other country. For centuries the peasantry had waged a stubborn struggle for land. Often they rose in arms against the tsarist regime, but their rebellions were always drowned in blood. But even after the victorious February Revolution, after the overthrow of tsarism, the peasants did not receive the lands of their former masters. The masses of the peasants and village poor demanded that they be given all the landed estates at once and without any payment; but the Provisional Government, including the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, told them to wait for the Constituent Assembly. Whenever the peasants spurned this advice and seized the

land themselves, the Provisional Government took severe repressive measures.

Again it was only the Bolsheviks who told the truth to the masses of the peasantry and the village poor and who showed them the right road to follow. They told them: If you want to get the lands of the tsar, of the landlords and of the church and get them free of charge, you must drive out of your ranks the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, these lackeys of the capitalists and landlords; you must make common cause with the working class for the overthrow of the rule of the capitalists and landlords and must establish Soviet rule. And because the majority of the peasants and of the village poor followed the advice of the Bolsheviks, the peasant masses in Russia were able to realize their age-old dream, were able to satisfy their hunger for land.

The socialist revolution smashed the prison of peoples, liberated the oppressed nations and created the precondition for a fraternal alliance of free and equal peoples. Everybody knows the attitude of tsarist Russia toward its non-Russian nationalities. A prison of the peoples—such is the Leninist-Stalinist description of the situation at that time. Dozens of oppressed peoples who had no equal rights, with chauvinism and mutual animosity rampant among them, and encouraged by the authorities so that the latter might “divide and rule”; national, religious and racial dissensions and pogroms deliberately and artificially fostered for the purpose

of hampering a joint struggle of the exploited masses of the various nations against their common enemy, tsarism—such was tsarism’s policy in the national question.

The February Revolution brought no fundamental change in this situation. The Russian bourgeoisie, which took part in the imperialist war to make new territorial conquests, was not even thinking of granting freedom to the nations hitherto oppressed. Of course the servitors of the capitalists and the landlords—the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries—who were gushing over with grandiose declarations about “revolution,” “democracy” and “liberty,” recognized in principle, that is, paid lip service, to the right of nations to self-determination. But they were deaf to all arguments that the right of self-determination without the right to secede and form an independent state was a mere fake.

The Bolsheviks, headed by Lenin and Stalin, were the only ones who taught the peoples of Russia the right solution of the national question; they showed that only the overthrow of the capitalists and the landlords and the establishment of Soviet power could clear the road of the peoples of Russia to national freedom, and create the prerequisites for the fraternity and collaboration of peoples on a new basis—the basis of a voluntary fraternal alliance of free and equal nations in a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The victorious socialist revolution carried out the expropriation of the expropriators. It made a breach in the order of things that had existed

for thousands of years—the exploitation of man by man—and established the foundation of classless society. The masses in the belligerent countries, which had endured more than three years of war, gave ever clearer evidence of their discontent and indignation. In many countries revolutionary events were being heralded. In Russia itself revolution was in full swing. In many countries at war the power, the domination, the social order of the ruling class hung in the balance.

No wonder, then, that the bourgeoisie intensified its terror against the masses and at the same time used every means of deception and beguilement to direct the revolutionary movement of the masses into channels that would not endanger the foundation of bourgeois rule. It became more and more apparent that the exploited masses were no longer willing to live in the old way, that they were clamoring ever more insistently for something new, for a new life, for a new deal. The parties in power therefore made all kinds of promises to the masses. Even the word “socialism” became stylish, and not only in the glib speeches of the inglorious heroes of the Second International but also in the mouths of other fakers and agents of the bourgeoisie. “Socialism” and “socialization”—of course, only after the achievement of “final victory” in the imperialist war and in agreement with the capitalists—was the bait with which they sought to catch the people.

In Russia, thanks to the Bolsheviks, they failed. The Bolsheviks

ruthlessly exposed the deceitful promises of the enemies of the people, branded the swindlers for what they were and succeeded in getting the people to turn their backs completely on these montebanks.

Socialism? Yes, indeed! But socialism requires at least two essential conditions: that power be in the hands of the working class—the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the expropriation of the expropriators—the socialization of the means of production. If these prerequisite conditions are not to be established, all mention of socialism is either idle talk or deliberate deception. And precisely the fact that on this fundamental question the people of Russia sided with the Bolsheviks and not with the various creatures of capitalism—precisely this fact was responsible for the real socialization accomplished in Russia, and for putting an end to the exploitation of man by man.

* * *

When, before the October Revolution, Lenin and Stalin mustered and deployed the political army in preparation for the storming of the citadels of capitalism, for the struggle for Soviet power, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, there were not a few who spread among the working class and the whole people the spirit of timidity—disbelief in their own strength and belief in the all-powerfulness of the bourgeoisie and its coercive apparatus. There were also not a few who instilled among them fear of the struggle and of the sacrifices it would entail.

In contrast to these wailings of the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary calamity-howlers, the Bolsheviks never tired of impressing upon the people that it was a downright lie to tell them they were powerless to do anything. They said to them: You are the overwhelming majority. You are armed. It is upon you that production, transportation and food supply depend. You have your organizations and your Soviets. And you have your party, a party which does not whine, which knows what it wants, which fights and is mustering the forces for the decisive combat. But who is it that undermines your forces? It is those who pretend to be the friends of the people but in reality are in the pay of your worst enemies; it is those who instill in your minds the poison of disbelief in yourselves, the poison of servile cringing before your exploiters. You must exterminate these elements from your ranks, you must drive them out of the Soviets and other organizations and must rally around the Bolshevik Party. And then the toiling masses of Russia will show the world that they can cope not only with the tsar but also with the landlords and the capitalists.

The Bolsheviks never concealed the fact that the struggle for power, the conquest of power and the building up of a new society would demand great sacrifices from the proletariat and the working people in general. On the contrary, it was the quacks in the camp of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries who fed the people such fables as that socialism, the new system of

society, could somehow or other be "painlessly" arrived at.

But the masses who had gone through the hell-fire of the front-line trenches, who had witnessed the frightful devastation, the starvation and disease, the terrific holocaust of war, in brief, that entire inferno of dying capitalism—these masses figured: We are making sacrifices daily without end—enormous sacrifices. What for? Obviously not for our own benefit but for the benefit of our masters, the capitalists and landlords. We, the working people, the exploited, have always been making enormous sacrifices so that our exploiters may possess power, fame, riches and pleasures. And it is quite clear that so long as the exploiters are in power things will not be otherwise. They will force us to make ever new sacrifices, and not only us but also our children and grandchildren, just as they exacted sacrifices from our parents, grand parents and great grandparents. Is it not time to put an end to all this? If we have to make sacrifices, let it not be sacrifices in the interests of those who oppress us and butcher us, but sacrifices in our own interests, in our own cause, sacrifices that will benefit our families, our class, that will benefit the future of all humanity. And we shall make these sacrifices all the more willingly since they will be such smaller than those we were forced to make on the altar of capital.

It was solely this readiness of the masses to enter the struggle and make the heaviest sacrifices that endowed the revolutionary move-

ment with that force and sweep which were indispensable not only for the overthrow of the exploiters and the defense of the newly gained power but also for the building of the new society. The history of Soviet rule from its commencement to the present day is the history of a class struggle against the domestic and foreign foe, waged in various forms and by diverse means. Without this struggle, which must be carried on with a gun in one hand and a trowel in the other, it would have been impossible to build socialism.

The working class of Russia received a wretched heritage from the capitalists and the landlords. The former ruling classes had reduced the country to the brink of ruin. The new life had to be built on the wreckage of the old. The bourgeoisie, beaten but not yet given the final blow, committed sabotage wherever and however it could. It was necessary to smash their old machinery of government and create a new, a Soviet, government machinery. This task was unprecedented in human history. But the brilliant genius of Lenin and Stalin, their foresight, combined with the militant and creative enthusiasm of the masses, successfully accomplished this extraordinary task.

It was necessary to destroy the economic basis of the former ruling classes, to deprive them of the means of production, to transfer the latter to the people, to the Soviet state, and to set them going again. This task, too, the Bolsheviks fulfilled. At the same time it was necessary to utilize the short respite

after the conclusion of the Peace of Brest Litovsk to make the military preparations needed to defend the country from the expected counter-attack of the counter-revolution. Here, too, the Bolsheviks proved that they were able to cope with the tasks that confronted them. For, being almost empty-handed, it was indeed no easy task to build, on the ruins of the old army, an army of a new type, based on different principles—the Red Army.

As the Bolsheviks had foreseen, the respite did not last long.

A union was effected between the forces of domestic counter-revolution and the forces of imperialist foreign intervention. Driven from power, from the good life and their full meat troughs, the "patriots" of every hue and shade called foreign forces of intervention into the country. They were prepared to see the country drowned in blood and would rather sell its last acre to foreign pirates than allow the victory of the people. A period of civil war and intervention began. It was an epoch of unwonted heroism and willingness to sacrifice on the part of the masses which, under the leadership of the dauntless and glorious Party of Lenin and Stalin, were defending their country and the gains of the Revolution for which they had fought so hard. The young Red Army took shape in battle. The finest men of the working class left their places at the bench and hastened to the front. The counter-revolutionary elements all over the country raised their ugly heads. Almost insuperable difficulties arose in the supply of food and in trans-

portation. The soldiers kept up the fight though their arms were bad, and the workers worked despite starvation and cold. At times it seemed that the forces of counter-revolution and intervention would triumph, but in spite of everything they were repulsed, defeated and finally driven out of the country.

But the termination of the intervention and of the Civil War did not mean the end of struggle and difficulties. Difficulties arose in other spheres and in other forms. The country was now entering the period of the restoration of its national economy. The imperialist war, the civil war and the intervention had left deep marks in the economic life of the country. Production had dropped enormously. Agricultural output was only one-half and industrial output one-seventh of the corresponding pre-war figures. But the means of production that were destroyed could not be renewed without consolidating the alliance between the working class and the peasantry on a new economic basis.

The Party therefore veered from the policy of War Communism to the New Economic Policy. This turn was accompanied by a sharp struggle against the class enemy outside the Party as well as against those elements within the Party which were hostile to it and which had intensified their struggle against the Party particularly after Lenin's death. The Bolsheviks with Stalin at their head fulfilled the tasks of this period, too. Decisive successes were scored in the restor-

ation of the economic life of the country.

In renewing the national economy it was primarily a question of renewing the old. But what sufficed for tsarism was insufficient for the socialist state. It was necessary to go further, to introduce socialist industrialization, to establish new branches of industry which had not existed in Russia in the days of the tsars. These included the national defense industries and a modern farm machinery industry. The latter was essential for the conversion of the millions of individual farms into collective large-scale production units.

In effecting this grand plan of socialist industrialization, the Soviet Government could not count on any help from the outside, from foreign capitalists. It had to secure the vast means required by relying on its own reserves, by tapping its own resources. This was a very difficult task, although the Soviet state had at its disposal the yield of the nationalized factories, of the banks, the transportation systems and of trade, which under capitalism would have flowed in the shape of profits into the pockets of social parasites.

It will not be amiss to state here that there is not a single instance in the history of a capitalist country accomplishing its industrialization by recourse solely to its own internal resources, without the pillage of foreign lands and without the aid of foreign loans. The fulfilment of such an enormous task required the exertion of tremendous effort. This was particularly so because the enemies inside and outside of the

Party as well as within and without the country were launching a furious campaign against the Stalinist plan of socialist industrialization. But despite all these difficulties the tasks which confronted the country during this period were also fulfilled, though a hard struggle was required. The basis of a heavy industry was laid and the First Five-Year Plan of socialist construction was confirmed.

The successes of socialist industrialization enabled the Party of the Bolsheviks to proceed to the achievement of a historic task, which, except for the conquest of power, was the most difficult task—the complete collectivization of agriculture and the abolition of the kulaks as a class. Just think what it meant to lead millions of small peasant farmers with their backward, “grandfatherly” means and methods of production, with the psychology of small individual producers, to adopt large-scale, collective farming with the use of modern machinery—to lead them to the road of socialism. Just think what it meant to abolish the kulaks as a class, to pull out the last roots of capitalism in the country. Just think how many complicated political, economic, administrative and organizational problems the Party of the Bolsheviks had to solve in this connection; you will then grasp the entire complexity and difficulty of the realization of collectivization in the countryside.

The remnants of the capitalist elements in the country and the whole capitalist world realized that this was the most serious and most

decisive attack, after the October Revolution, upon their remaining positions in the Land of Socialism. Hence a fierce onslaught was made by the anti-Soviet elements against the policy of collectivization which was being carried out by the Bolshevik Party. In this struggle all the former anti-Party groups degenerated into direct agencies of the foreign imperialists, became gangs of spies, saboteurs and assassins, became an infuriated pack of enemies of the peoples.

It took a heavy fight for the Party to sweep away these enemies and to accomplish the stupendous task of leading the decisive masses of the peasants to the road of socialism. The Party now entered the struggle for the completion of the construction of socialist society and for the gradual transition to communist society. The Stalinist Constitution, the triumph of Soviet democracy, was the crowning achievement of this struggle.

* * *

Thus even after its glorious victory in October, 1917, the Soviet people waged many a struggle, made many a sacrifice and exerted many a strenuous effort. But who does not know the thorny path which during this period had to be traversed by the working people in the capitalist countries? Their road led them from crisis to crisis, from unemployment to unemployment, from misery to misery, from starvation to starvation, from terror to terror, from enslavement to enslavement. What for?

The Soviet people have fought for and achieved socialism, have gained

a life full of light and joy. But the working people in the capitalist countries have landed in a new imperialist war.

Two decades after the end of the first imperialist World War a new imperialist war has broken out. It too is expanding into a world war. Again the nations are afflicted with the same horrors and torments as in 1914-18; nay, they are even more frightful and ghastly. "Total" warfare, the mass bombardment of factories, towns and villages, has abolished the distinction between front and rear. Death drops from the sky annihilating not only soldiers but also workers in the factories, women in the streets, children at school, the sick in the hospitals and sailors and fishermen at sea. While the rich promptly built themselves luxurious shelters, equipped with all kinds of comforts and in accordance with all the rules of hygiene, the masses of the working people have either no shelters at all or are assigned miserable holes, damp cellars and unheated tunnels in which they spend the nights without sleep, hungry and cold, only to start a new twelve to fourteen-hour working day in the factory early next morning. And this is merely the beginning of the second imperialist war with no end in sight.

The Soviet Union, on the other hand, is not involved in this war. Due to its strength and power and the wise policy of its Government, it has so far succeeded in maintaining peace and providing peaceful work for its population.

Ever new countries and nations are being drawn into the vortex of

the imperialist war; the fate of states and nations is but a throw of the dice in the hands of the imperialists. The new partition of the world, which is the aim of this war, means nothing else but a new and arbitrary changing of the map. For many peoples it spells the loss of their national independence, their degradation and enslavement, the stunting of their growth, their decimation.

Above these turbid waves of barbarism the Soviet Union towers like a beacon of liberty, of equality and of the fraternal alliance of peoples. She stands before the nations as the bearer of freedom. The Soviet Union has liberated the peoples of the Western Ukraine and of Western Byelorussia and has led them out of the imperialist war. The Soviet Union has brought national and social liberation to the peoples of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. The peoples of Lithuania, Latvia and Esthonia have joined the fraternal family of nations of the Soviet Union. The population of the Soviet Union is now 193,000,000, an increase of 23,000,000. The number of Union Republics is no longer eleven but sixteen.

Even before the war the democratic rights of the people fared badly at the hands of the imperialists. Conditions in this sphere have become still worse and even unbearable after the outbreak of the war. The only right which the imperialists now grant to the working people is the right to be silent, to serve, to work, to undergo privations and to pay, to bleed and die for the greater honor, the greater

glory and the greater profits of "their" bourgeoisie.

And because the working people cannot rest content with this sole right, because they are compelled to resist if they are to continue their existence, the imperialists retaliate by introducing brutal measures of repression. Hundreds of the foremost champions of the international proletariat have already fallen in this war by the hand of the executioner. Tens of thousands of active opponents of the imperialist war are languishing in prison. Most of the class organizations of the workers have been banned by the imperialists. Gone are the last vestiges of the so-called freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly and of association. Elections have become a rarity and when held it is made impossible for the true representatives of the people to appear as candidates. In this war, unbridled, brutal dictatorship has become the prevailing form of government of the imperialists.

On the other hand, in the Soviet Union, under the Stalinist Constitution, Soviet democracy is rapidly reaching its full development. In the course of this imperialist war general elections to the local Soviets have been held in the Soviet Union. In the liberated Western Ukraine and in Western Byelorussia, the popular masses have sent their elected representatives to the popular assemblies and later to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. In the liberated Baltic republics—Lithuania, Latvia and Esthonia—elections to the national Sejms have been held. The elections to the local

Soviets of the Karelo-Finnish Republic as well as of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia have also taken place.

The campaign for the election of deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. from the Lithuanian Union Republic, the Latvian Union Republic, the Esthonian Union Republic and the Moldavian Union Republic was in full progress. A broad campaign was waged for the election of trade union functionaries. In the Soviet Union the election of representatives to organs of government or elections in labor organizations are not a mere formality, confined to the casting of votes. In the Soviet Union every election denotes an immense development of the political initiative of the broadest masses, the direct participation of millions of people in the examination of the problems of the day, in criticism and self-criticism of representatives, their work, their mistakes and shortcomings. And the elections themselves are an excerpt of Soviet democracy in its entirety which finds expression not only at election time but permeates everyday life: in the factories, on the collective farms, in the Soviets, in the various organizations, in the Soviet press and in the wall newspapers—the innumerable places where the Soviet people have their say throughout the year and take a direct part in the administration of public affairs.

Even before the present imperialist war the farmers in the capitalist countries went through a severe economic crisis. The war has disrupted still more thoroughly the

economic life of the dirt farmers in the capitalist countries. In those territories in which military operations were conducted, tens of thousands of peasant families have lost all their belongings while their farms were simply destroyed.

But even the millions of dirt farmers who have not been directly visited by the ravages of the imperialist war are suffering severely from its consequences. A great part of the farmers and their grown-up sons have been mobilized so that the whole burden of the heavy work now rests upon the shoulders of the women, the children and the aged. A great part of the draft animals and of the milk and beef cattle has been requisitioned. The soil is not properly tilled so that there is a drop in harvest yields. The requisitions and compulsory deliveries of farm products are often so enormous that the farmers do not have enough left to feed their families and their cattle. Farm incomes are declining but taxes are increasing. The farmers are still saddled with the old debts and new debts are being added. As a result an increasing number of the smaller farms are being gobbled up by the banks and usurers, and a farmer and his whole family, no matter how hard they may try, do not earn enough to pay the interest demanded by these bloodsuckers. The result is an ever-increasing flight from the farms—the proletarianization of the farmer masses in the capitalist countries.

How different is the position of the Soviet farmers, the collective farmers! The collective farmers

have been assigned land for their perpetual use free of charge; nor is their land burdened with the exactions of bankers and usurers. The Soviet state supplies the collective farms with an ever-increasing quantity of agricultural machinery, artificial fertilizer, selected seeds and pedigreed cattle, which facilitates the work of the collective farmers and increases the yield of the soil. After fulfilling the comparatively easy obligations to their socialist state, the collective farms retain the full balance of the yield for themselves and their members. If the collective farmers work at all conscientiously, they soon find themselves on the road to prosperity, to a life of joy and culture.

The imperialist war has utterly disrupted and disorganized the national economy of the capitalist countries. The capitalist world has not yet overcome the consequences of the previous severe economic crises and already finds itself knee-deep in a much more severe crisis. Production has been restricted to the needs of the war; the needs of the people are completely relegated to the background. The war devours huge sums of money. The imperialists declare cynically that the people must be more "modest" in their requirements in order that war expenditures may be covered. And the people are forced to comply; wages are reduced, prices are raised, the working day is lengthened to as much as fourteen hours, compulsory loans are issued and the production of the necessities of life is reduced to a minimum or stopped altogether.

Thus the working people must tighten their belts more and more and are bled white in order to fill the coffers of the munition lords and war contractors. In spite of the enormous production of war supplies, unemployment is not decreasing because of the severe restrictions in, or even the total stoppage of, all branches of production not directly connected with the war. In this way the imperialists have brought their economy to such a pass that in the second year of war capitalist Europe faces the immediate danger of starvation—starvation in the literal sense of the word.

Contrast with this the national economy of the Soviet Union which is developing further at an even rate, without crisis and unemployment. The defensive and economic capacity of the Land of the Soviets is growing; the Stalinist Third Five-Year Plan is being carried out consistently. Not only the output of heavy industry but also that of light industry is being raised. The supply of manufactured articles of general consumption and of food products of every description is on the increase. The extra output achieved as a result of the increasing labor productivity of the Soviet workers, farmers and intellectuals is not pocketed by exploiters but inures to the benefit of the whole Soviet people; the extra output strengthens the economic and military might of the country so that the Soviet Union may be prepared for any contingency.

* * *

The working people owe it first

and foremost to the Social-Democratic parties and their so-called Second International that the imperialists were able to visit mankind with a new holocaust of war. By the treacherous policy which they pursued for many years, these parties, which are agencies of the bourgeoisie in the ranks of the working class, have paved the way for all the suffering which the laboring masses and the people in general in the capitalist world must now endure.

It started with their support of the imperialist World War of 1914-18. It continued when they took an active part in the crusade of reaction, counter-revolution and intervention against the Soviet Republic then in the making. It continued further when they played a leading part in the crushing of the revolution in Central Europe whereby they saved the life of at least European capitalism. It went on when Social-Democracy, at the expense of the broad masses, helped capitalism, rotten to the core, to get on its feet, at which time, filled with servile pride, they did not hesitate to refer to themselves as "healers of capitalism." It found further expression in the line they followed during the period of the great economic crisis when Social-Democracy strained every effort to help the capitalists shift the burdens of the crisis onto the shoulders of the working people. It continued in their steady and obstinate sabotage of every endeavor to create a broad people's front against reaction and war. And it ended, as it was bound to end, in a new imperialist war.

And the policy of the Social-Democratic parties during the new imperialist war is in no way less contemptible, corrupt or treasonable than was their policy in 1914-18. Once more they discover that the imperialist war is a "just" war—of course only on the part of "their" masters and employers. Once more they call upon the masses to give active support to this war—meaning, of course, only support to "their" lords and masters. Once more they unfold before the people enticing prospects of an entirely new world and an entirely new life—to commence, of course, only after the final victory of those in whose pay they are! And once again they are united in their bestial hatred of the revolutionary proletariat and the Land of Socialism.

True enough, the Second International is falling to pieces. There is not a single Social-Democratic Party that has not been shaken to its foundations, that has not experienced a crisis. But let no one be deceived! Just as a putrid body gives off deadly poison and contaminates every living thing with which it comes in contact, so the Social-Democratic parties still disseminate a poison, the poison of Social-Democratism. And they do this everywhere: in those places where they still enjoy high favor with the bourgeoisie as well as in those places where they have been kicked in the rear.

Everywhere they serve only one purpose: the undermining of the labor movement and the salvation of capitalism. In one place—where

they occupy ministerial seats—they announce to the workers outright the need of enlisting all forces and organizations of the working class in the service of the imperialist war, and of "voluntarily" accepting all privations. In another place they desert with flying colors to the "enemy" of yesterday and advise the workers to bow "to the inevitable." But wherever the working people make the slightest move in defense of their rights and their vital interests, they immediately begin their work of disruption, sow distrust among the working people in their own strength and paralyze their power to take action.

Only the Communists resolutely oppose this sapping of the strength of the working class and of its ability to act. They rouse the people in all countries to a realization of the fact that the proletariat represents a tremendous force if it is aware of its power as a class, if it unites as a class, if it maintains its state of organization, if it does not confide in the leadership of the bourgeoisie but only in firm, clear-sighted, revolutionary leadership that has sprung from its own ranks, that is flesh of its own flesh and imbued with its own spirit.

It is only under the leadership of a steadfast and militant proletarian party that the workers can defend their own interests even in the most difficult situations, and can gain a way out of the imperialist war, out of misery, servitude and blood-reeking massacres. Social-Democracy can never supply such leadership, for it is its very policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, its

very policy of betrayal and capitulation, that has reduced the proletariat to its present misery, that has brought down upon the proletariat all the horrors it must endure today. Only the Communist Party, because of its staunchness and heroism, because of its correct appraisal of events and its undeviating proletarian policy, has proved itself worthy of the confidence of the workers.

It was the Communists that always boldly defied the instigators of war, that were always persecuted and put under the ban, imprisoned and executed because they never and nowhere dropped their opposition to the imperialist war or abandoned their struggle against those who instigated it. It is the Communists who never and nowhere allow themselves to become discouraged; who bring the workers to a realization of the fact that it is possible to fight even under the most difficult conditions; that no matter how hard it might seem it is still possible for the working people to win certain demands if they act unitedly. It is the Communists who never and nowhere approve the sentiment fostered by the capitulators that there is no sense in working in the trade unions under the conditions of war and terror; it is the Communists who untiringly explain to the workers that in no event must they surrender their organizations, that they must remain organized, or restore their organizations, in whatever form it may prove possible.

At the bidding of the bourgeoisie, the Social-Democratic leaders have split the working class and prevented its unity by every means in their power. The Communists have been straining every fiber to restore the class unity of the proletariat on a new basis, on a basis that is free from the rot of Social-Democratism, on a basis that has not been undermined by the treachery of the Social-Democratic leaders. The Communists view the struggle against Social-Democratism and against the Social-Democratic leaders, the joint struggle of the Communist and Social-Democratic workers, as the prerequisite for the class unity which is so indispensable, as the most important step for the unification of all sections of the working people. The proletariat has the inherent strength to inspire new hope and confidence in the nations that have fallen victim to the catastrophe of war, that have become dejected and are seized with dark despair. It possesses the power to arouse these nations, to give them stamina and leadership in the struggle for freedom and peace.

This struggle, in which the workers of all countries will have before them the shining example of Bolshevik fearlessness, perseverance, steadfastness and devotion is a pledge that the working class of the capitalist countries will also be prepared for all contingencies and will also be able to cope with all tasks which the course of history may impose upon them.

TWENTY-THREE YEARS OF SOVIET POWER

By M. I. KALININ

(Speech at meeting celebrating the twenty-third anniversary of the Soviet Government, November 6, 1940.)

COMRADES, the twenty-third year of the existence of Soviet power will occupy a prominent place in the history of the U.S.S.R. It is a year of important successes both in socialist construction and in the sphere of foreign policy.

At the beginning of the current year the fulfillment of the production plan in industry entailed serious difficulties. I refer not to the usual difficulties attendant upon our growth, but to difficulties connected with the international situation prevailing at the time. The nature of these difficulties is well known to you and requires no further elucidation.

Nevertheless, the 1940 plan is expected to be fulfilled with an excess over last year which, even according to conservative estimates, will amount to 13,600,000,000 rubles, or 11 per cent. This, of course, does not include the industry of the Western regions of the Ukraine and Byelorussia and the new Soviet republics.

Definite progress has been regis-

tered this year in the iron and steel, and the coal industries. The output of metal and coal is steadily on the upgrade.

For example, the output of coal, as compared with the corresponding months of last year, amounted to: July, 112 per cent; August, 114.3 per cent; September, 116 per cent.

Considerable successes have been achieved in the non-ferrous metals industry.

On the whole, comrades, during the second half of the current year there has been a considerable increase in heavy industry and all its branches.

Light industry also worked satisfactorily.

Of all the numerous new construction jobs, I should like to mention two that are already being put into operation.

The first is the Uglich Hydroelectric Station with a capacity of 110,000 kw. It is being put into operation without any pomp, although it is twice as large as the Volkhov power station. The Uglich

station is an important addition to the power resources of the central region, particularly Moscow, and increases the depth of the Volga for two hundred kilometers below the Ivankovo dam.

The second is the Chirchik Hydro-electric Station in Uzbekistan, the capacity of whose first section is 43,000 kw. A nitrogen plant, which will use power supplied by this station, has been built to extract nitrogen from water and air. This goes a long way toward solving the problem of supplying fertilizers for the cotton plantations of the Central Asian Soviet republics, besides relieving the railways of the haulage of freight they otherwise would have to carry.

Our railway transport has coped with its work and successfully fulfilled all special tasks.

* * *

Agriculture has not a few achievements to its credit, although weather conditions in 1940 have been none too favorable.

The cold spell in the spring made it imperative to shorten the sowing period drastically. Our collective farms carried out this task satisfactorily.

It should be stated outright that had not our socialist agriculture been so well equipped with machinery, it would have been impossible to cope with the caprices of nature. And the result is that the harvest this year was good. The total grain crop is near the seven billion pood* mark.

The successes of agriculture are strikingly demonstrated at the Agricultural Exhibition, whose scale was even greater this year, the numerous branches of collective farming being more widely displayed than before.

Whereas last year there were 196,743 participants, this year the number increased to 327,566. Among them were 348 machines and tractor stations, 19,730 collective farms, 951 state farms, 15,118 collective farm livestock sections and 286,994 outstanding agriculturists.

Instead of the 45 districts that took part in the Exhibition in 1939, the Chief Exhibition Committee had to qualify 252 districts for participation.

Even more significant is the fact that among those exhibiting for the first time were entire territories and regions that exceeded the set standards for grain harvests and stockbreeding for three years in succession and completed their deliveries to the state before the scheduled time.

The following data likewise testify to the successes in agriculture achieved by the various regions and territories.

In 1940 every fifth machine and tractor station in Krasnodar Territory, one out of every three collective farms in Orjonikidze Territory, and nearly every other agricultural artel in Zaporozhye Region were represented at the exhibition.

The work and achievements of new thousands of Stakhanovites, gifted organizers of collective farming, graced the exhibition this year.

* A pood equals 36.113 lbs.—Ed.

The record harvests, the weight gained by young stock, and the record milk yields they have achieved are far in advance of those demonstrated in the pavilions in 1939.

In Western Europe, on the other hand, the caprices of nature this year, plus the war, have considerably reduced the harvest. And there the problem of feeding the population is extremely grave.

But even those European countries that are not participating in the war are suffering from a bad harvest.

* * *

The Soviet Government adopted a number of special measures calculated to accelerate the pace of industrial development.

Thus, the edict of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. of June 26, 1940, introduced the eight-hour working day and the seven-day week instead of the six-day week, forbade workers and employees from arbitrarily leaving enterprises and institutions, etc.

The edict of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. of July 10, 1940, made the release of goods of poor quality or incomplete manufacture a punishable offense.

It should be perfectly clear to each one of you, comrades, that all these edicts pursue one aim, namely, to introduce complete order in industry, to insure its growth according to plan. Without this our industry cannot develop and grow rapidly. And if we bear in mind the

international situation today, the need and expediency of these edicts will be self-evident.

The title of "Hero of Socialist Labor" was recently conferred upon nine designers. This fact is extremely significant, comrades. It testifies to the high level of designing in our country. And now it is essential for us to consolidate these achievements in designing by producing high quality goods.

Another important measure adopted by the Soviet Government is the creation of state labor reserves, which solves one of the most important problems of socialist construction.

In capitalist countries there is no need to think about setting up labor reserves. In capitalist countries there is a huge reserve army of labor made up of the unemployed. During the past two decades these armies have grown in numbers owing to the prolonged economic crises.

Hence in capitalist countries it is not a question of creating labor reserves but of utilizing if only a small section of the unemployed, of giving them work of some kind. The army of unemployed is unpleasant and highly dangerous, inflammable material for the capitalist world.

Incidentally, in spite of the army of unemployed the capitalist countries have lately begun to feel the lack of a reserve of skilled labor. For example, in Britain—the classical land of capitalism—there is a definite shortage of highly skilled workers. The capitalists recklessly

squandered this valuable reserve during the years of crises.

Unemployment was abolished long ago in the Soviet Union. Socialist industry is developing at a rapid pace. Labor reserves in the cities have been exhausted and the influx of labor from the villages has stopped.

Prior to the Revolution millions of ruined peasants came to the towns in search of work. Nowadays the collective farm peasantry, even those who work more or less conscientiously, are guaranteed a decent living. And that is why the collective farm village does not spontaneously provide the labor power essential for industry.

Our industry and agriculture are developing along socialist planned lines. Our state has at its disposal all the funds and material stocks; it plans the means of production and the finances.

But up till now, labor power, which is one of the principal, decisive elements in production, had not been planned sufficiently. Even given all the other elements of productions, there can be no production if labor power is lacking; without labor power all the other elements of production are worthless.

The shortage of skilled labor particularly in the branches of heavy industry retarded our progress. Taking this into consideration, the Soviet Government set about creating labor reserves, commenced the organized training of labor needed for socialist industry. The realization of the edict of the

Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. on the creation of state labor reserves, i.e., to train, at the expense of the state, skilled workers in trade and industrial training schools, will guarantee the further steady advance of our industry.

It is characteristic that a certain foreign newspaper—which, like the rest of the bourgeois press, is none too well disposed toward any of the measures of the Soviet power, striving to disparage everything undertaken by the Soviet power—this newspaper said that when this measure is put into effect the Soviet Union will be a first-class industrial country. We do not often hear such comments from our enemies.

It is the duty of our Party, trade union, Young Communist League and economic organizations to do everything in their power to help build up the state labor reserves.

* * *

Comrades, I have already told you that foreign events this year have influenced our economy as well. And how could it have been otherwise! Remember that the war with Finland, which began on December 1 last year, demanded certain exertion on our part.

You know that the forces of nature here were wholly against the Soviet troops. The impassable forests, the swamps, the deep snow, the severe frosts that stood at 40° below almost throughout the entire campaign made it difficult for our military technique to be utilized to the full.

But the Soviet troops showed that essentially no obstacles exist for them. Within three months Finland had to sign peace on the Soviet Union's terms.

This war has not yet found its chronicler. And on the whole far too little has been written about the remarkable feats of heroism accomplished by our units and by individuals during the Finnish campaign.

The corrupt press of the bourgeoisie slandered the Red Army. But finally a number of correspondents were obliged to admit in their own newspapers that they had sent false dispatches in order to vilify the Red Army.

I believe that our military commissariat will endeavor to publish the true story of this war.

Many military units, tens of thousands of men, commanders, political instructors and other participants in the Finnish campaign have been awarded Orders, medals or other marks of distinction. But, of course, there were immeasurably more who deserved to be decorated. This was testified to by those who came to receive their awards. Four hundred and five men were awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. And this is the highest award in our country, an award conferred for exceptional exploits.

These figures alone speak volumes for the valor and heroism of our Red Army. This means that the Soviet people have been wholly repaid for the love they all cherish for the Red Army.

Comrades, this year the territory and the population of the Soviet Union have considerably increased with the affiliation of three republics, Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

This affiliation is very significant. I, for one, cannot remember that it has any precedent in history.

The capitalist cliques in Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania ruled for twenty years. For twenty years they waged a campaign, striving to imbue their people with hatred for the Soviet Union. But they were powerless to stifle the deep feeling of affection cherished by these peoples for the Soviet Union.

The former governments of Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which had actually no support among the people, had to step aside to make room for people's governments. And these governments, fulfilling the will of their peoples, requested the Soviet Government to admit them into the U.S.S.R. The result is that today Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania are full-fledged republics of the great Soviet Union. Here you have a concrete manifestation of the deep feelings of love the peoples of these countries cherish for the U.S.S.R.

A great historical injustice was remedied this year when Bessarabia was reunited to the Soviet Union.

One must recall the treachery of the Rumanian boyars and capitalists. In the last World War Russia was an ally of Rumania. The Russian troops fought on the Rumanian front, protecting the Rumanians from the German troops. And when the workers and peasants came to

power in our country, the Rumanian boyars and capitalists, taking advantage of our temporary military weakness, seized part of our territory.

Bessarabia and North Bukovina, which is inhabited by Ukrainians, have been returned. It is needless to speak of the joy with which the Bessarabians and the Ukrainians of North Bukovina joined the Soviet Union. The units of the Red Army saw sufficient evidence of this rejoicing when they were given a rousing welcome by the population of these territories.

And so, comrades, nearly twenty-three million people have joined the Soviet Union this year. They have just joined us, but it seems as if they were good old Soviet territories. They have received all the rights of Soviet citizenship, beginning with the honorable right of serving in the Red Army. And the armies of Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania have entirely merged with the Red Army. This fact alone shows how great, how solid is the true fraternity of the peoples of the Soviet Union. Find anything like it in history!

* * *

Comrades, war is now in progress between great leading European powers, and war is being fought for the fourth year in the Far East. This means that nearly the entire world is in a state of war. As a matter of fact, the Soviet Union alone of the big countries is not involved in war; it is preserving a strict neutrality.

Such a huge war, of course, cannot but affect neutral countries, if only by hampering their foreign trade, at least over sea routes. Nevertheless, when nearly the whole world is involved in such a war, to keep out of it is a great boon.

I must point out that such a state of affairs does not come of itself. It is the result of our internal achievements and the successes of our foreign policy. It is the result of the activities of our leadership.

And the leadership as regards economy, foreign policy and military affairs comes from Comrade Stalin. (*Stormy applause, which rises to an ovation.*) Hence this is all the result of the Stalinist leadership.

Comrades, the international situation prevailing today does not give us the right to remain indifferent observers that calmly watch the development of events. The situation places great responsibilities upon every Soviet citizen.

The Soviet Union is the only socialist state in the world. For the first time in history the working people have a real fatherland of their own. The socialist fatherland—what a magnificent word! And there is no higher, no more noble and sacred task than to serve the socialist fatherland, not in words but in deeds.

Our prime and most important duty is to strengthen still further the economic and defense might of the socialist fatherland.

Worker, collective farmer, office employee, engineer, actor, writer.

scientist—every Soviet man and woman in his own sphere—must exert all his energy and will, all his abilities and strength to guarantee the further prosperity and to enhance the might of our socialist fatherland.

By so doing, the peoples of our Union will be fulfilling their duty to the international proletariat. This will be the true struggle for communism.

In this struggle for communism, we are led by the Communist Party, by Comrade Stalin. And today, when we are celebrating the jubilee of Soviet power, the twenty-third anniversary of the great October Socialist Revolution, and are re-

viewing the results of our struggle, it is with deep emotion and with all our heart that we greet our leader, the great Stalin. (*Stormy ovation.*)

Long live the twenty-third anniversary of the great October Socialist Revolution! (*Applause.*)

Long live the great Soviet people! (*Applause.*)

Long live the Communist Party of the Soviet Union! (*Applause.*)

Long live the leader of the Soviet people, the great Stalin! (*Stormy, prolonged ovation. All rise. The orchestra plays the "International." Cheers and exclamations in honor of Comrade Stalin resound through the hall.*)

MATHIAS RAKOSI FREED

BY E. GERÉ

IT WAS with great joy that the working people throughout the world learned that Mathias Rakosi had been released after more than fifteen years of imprisonment, and had arrived in Moscow on November 6. For his release, Rakosi is indebted to the Soviet Government.

Rakosi was accompanied by another prisoner of capitalism, Zoltan Weinberger, who had shared all the deprivations and hardships of the prison regime with him for fifteen years.

Mathias Rakosi is an outstanding leader of the Hungarian working class movement. His name is known far beyond the borders of Hungary. Throughout the fifteen years of his imprisonment the working people of all countries carried on a ceaseless struggle for his release. More than once they stayed the hangman's hand when his life virtually hung by a thread. Rakosi has become a symbol of the fearless, self-sacrificing and highly principled struggle of the Communists against the enemy of the working class; his conduct in the bourgeois court is a model of Bolshevik courage.

Mathias Rakosi was born on March 9, 1892, in the village of Ada, in Southern Hungary. From early childhood hunger and want were his lot. Upon completing ele-

mentary school he entered the high school in the neighboring city of Szeged. It was in this city that he later spent ten years of his life in a prison cell. Rakosi displayed considerable ability in the most varied subjects: chemistry, mathematics, history, etc. He received the highest marks in school. At the same time he supported himself by tutoring children of rich families. After graduating high school he entered the Eastern Academy in Budapest.

While still in high school in Szeged, Rakosi became interested in the labor movement, read *The Communist Manifesto* and took part in workers' demonstrations. In Budapest, the young Rakosi joined the Social-Democratic Party. He was at the same time one of the secretaries of the Galileo Society, a progressive student organization from whose ranks many Hungarian Communists subsequently came, including Emmerich Sallai, who was executed in Hungary in 1932 for Communist activities. Rakosi spent the two years preceding the outbreak of the imperialist war of 1914-18 in Germany and England, where he took an active part in the working class movement, studying all the while, primarily Marxism.

When the imperialist World War broke out, Rakosi was called up for

service in the Austro-Hungarian army, and after a brief period of military training was sent to the front. Subsequently he became a prisoner of war in Russia and was sent to the concentration camp in Chita. Rakosi was very active among the war prisoners. After the February Revolution, he was transferred from Chita to a camp in Dauria, where he remained till the October Socialist Revolution. Dauria was in the hands of the counter-revolutionary forces, but Rakosi succeeded in escaping. Overcoming tremendous difficulties he made his way to Soviet territory, arriving in Petrograd, where he remained till the spring of 1918 when he returned to Hungary.

In Hungary he immediately plunged into the revolutionary movement again, establishing contact with the group of the Zimmerwald Left, fighting against the treacherous policy of the Hungarian Social-Democratic Party leadership and carrying on anti-militarist activities among the soldiers. The Communist Party of Hungary was founded in November, 1918. Rakosi entered its ranks immediately, and began intensive and widespread activities. He established new branches of the Communist Party in a number of the larger provincial towns, including Szeged and Miskolc, was one of the most popular speakers of the Party, wrote extensively on Party questions, etc., and wherever a firm and staunch Communist, a bold organizer and capable mass worker was needed, he was sent. For this revolutionary activity, the bourgeoisie threw him into prison, where he remained until he was

freed by the establishment of a Soviet Government in Hungary.

During the period of Soviet rule in Hungary, Rakosi was Vice People's Commissar of Trade and Communications, and later Vice People's Commissar of Socialist Production. He was the youngest People's Commissar of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, being twenty-seven years of age at the time. In his work of regulating and distributing supplies and carrying out the nationalization of the factories, etc., he proved a gifted organizer. But he was more than an organizer of the country's economic life; he was also one of the organizers of the armed defense of the Hungarian Soviet government against the external foe. More than once Rakosi saved the situation at the eleventh hour, as, for instance, when he organized the heroic defense of Salgotarján, the only coal field in the possession of the Hungarian Soviet government. In true Bolshevik fashion, he roused thousands of miners, organized workers' battalions, smashed the sabotage of the Social-Democratic leaders, removed the traitors among the commanding staff and thus ensured the country of coal, without which all industry would have come to a standstill.

After the defeat of the Soviet government in Hungary, Rakosi had to flee to Austria, where he was interned by the Social-Democratic government. In 1920 he succeeded in getting out of Austria, and went to the Land of the Soviets, attending the Second Congress of the Communist International. Here he was the first of the Hungarian Communists to make a thorough and

critical analysis of the activity of the Communists during the period of Soviet rule in Hungary.

After the Second Congress of the Communist International, Rakosi took an active part in the working class movement of a number of European countries. He fought to free the workers from the influence of Social-Democracy, and helped to organize a Communist vanguard in these countries. He had a thorough knowledge of the principles of Marxism-Leninism, a perfect command of many European languages, and was thus able to grasp the specific features of the labor movement of whatever country he worked in in an astonishingly short period of time. He helped the Communists of various countries in their fight against opportunism, assisting them in the mastering of the principles of the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

Despite the death sentence that threatened him in Hungary, Rakosi returned to his native land to defend the cause of the working people there and to build up a Communist Party. The tremendous energy he put into this illegal work resulted in a considerable increase of the Communist Party's influence among the masses. But spies helped to put the police on his trail, and together with Zoltan Weinberger he was arrested and given over for court-martial.

This court could either acquit him or condemn him to death, a sentence that would have to be put into effect within two hours after it was delivered. The hangman, who had been specially summoned for this purpose, sat in the court-

room in anticipation of the death sentence. The gallows were in readiness. But Rakosi, Weinberger and the other Communist prisoners in the dock were not in the least deterred by all this. They had no fear of the hangman. It was not their lives they were defending, but the cause of the proletariat, the cause of the people. With head held high, firmly convinced of the invincible might of Communism, Rakosi spoke before the court. His conduct in court, his steadfast adherence to principle, forced even the class enemy to accord him reluctant admiration. Here is what the Hungarian bourgeois newspaper, the *Ujsag*, had to say about his conduct at the time:

"We must openly confess that we, dyed-in-the-wool bourgeois, are somewhat abashed by Rakosi and his comrades. These people, over whom hangs the death sentence, know that they can expect no clemency, but they do not detract from the things they have done by a single word. They deny nothing and renounce nothing. . . . In this way they make it impossible for us to hold them in contempt. It puts us to shame that the Communists have their fanatics to whom an ideal means more than their lives. The bourgeois ideal has no such fanatics."

The courageous behavior of Rakosi and his comrades roused a heartfelt response among the working people of Hungary and the rest of the world. Mass protest movements against the trial of Rakosi and his comrades sprang up everywhere. The court-martial was obliged to retreat: it brought in a

decision to hand over the case to the civil court.

The trial by civil court took place in June, 1926. Rakosi spoke no less fearlessly here than he had spoken during the first trial. He and his comrades had to put up a stiff fight from the dock to defend the Communist ideas and the policy of the revolutionary vanguard. Many times in the course of the trial Rakosi was severely penalized, put in solitary confinement and deprived of the opportunity to prepare for his defense. But nothing could quench his revolutionary spirit, his Bolshevik will, his dauntless energy. Even under the stern regime of prison conditions he still retained his characteristic smile and his imperturbable sense of humor. The most savage punishment could not turn him from the correct Bolshevik path.

This time Rakosi was sentenced to eight and a half years imprisonment. He received the sentence with a calm faith in the ultimate victory of the working class and proclaimed his belief for all to hear in open court where he and his condemned comrades staged a demonstration.

Rakosi was brought up before the court for a third time in January, 1935, when he had already served eight years of his sentence. A number of accusations were lodged against him in connection with his activities during the period of Soviet rule in Hungary, dating back more than fifteen years. At this trial, Rakosi declared in answer to the indictment:

"I approve of all the orders and

decrees of the Soviet Government. I assume full responsibility for everything that I have done in the name of the workers' and peasants' government."

This statement ran like a thread through all the political speeches of Rakosi throughout the period of the trial. As in his previous trials, he renounced all personal defense—he defended the cause of the Party, the cause of the working class and of all the working people. The court did not venture to pronounce the death sentence on Rakosi although he had been charged with forty-four murders. He was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Rakosi carried on the fight not only during the trials, but even in prison, during the long weary years of solitary confinement. Several times he was obliged to resort to that most painful mode of struggle, which is all that is left to the prisoner of capital—to hunger strikes. All in all he was on hunger strikes for approximately two months.

And after these fifteen years of suffering, Rakosi has remained the same young spirited, dauntless, cheerful and energetic fighter as was known to hundreds and thousands of Communists and working people in Hungary and in other countries of the world.

Mathias Rakosi was able to withstand all the adversities and hardships to which he was subjected because he was always closely linked up with the working class and the people, because he was inspired with the great ideal of communism.

THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE PEOPLES OF THE COLONIAL AND DEPENDENT COUNTRIES

By W. LEITNER

*"The call to fight for the emancipation of the nationalities . . . was first sounded by the people who were the victors in the October Revolution. The fact that Russia, which formerly served as a symbol of oppression in the eyes of the oppressed nationalities, has now, after it has become socialist, been transformed into a symbol of emancipation cannot be said to be a mere chance. Nor is it a mere chance that the name of the leader of the October Revolution, Comrade Lenin, is now a name highly cherished by the downtrodden, browbeaten peasants and revolutionary intelligentsia of the colonial and non-sovereign countries. If Christianity was formerly regarded by the oppressed and downtrodden slaves of the vast Roman Empire as a rock of salvation, we are now reaching a point where socialism may serve (and is already beginning to serve) as a banner of liberation for the millions of the vast colony-owning states of imperialism. (Joseph Stalin, *Marrism and the National and Colonial Question*, pp. 188-89, International Publishers, New York.)*

ONCE again have the enthralled peoples of Asia, Africa and South America become the object of

a bloody imperialist contest among the capitalist Great Powers. Once again are Negroes, Arabs and Hindus in Africa and Asia being incited against each other by their masters in a conflict, the only outcome of which can be, no matter which side wins, to bind the chains of colonial slavery on them all the tighter, if they do not themselves defeat the calculations of the imperialists. The situation today differs considerably from that which prevailed during the last World War. The interval between the last imperialist war and the present was marked by a powerful movement, in which the colonial peoples for the first time advanced their claim to liberty and a decent human existence. The present war cannot but have its effect upon this historical process, which is of immeasurably greater import to the history of humanity than all the "victories" of the imperialists.

Besides the bloody object lesson which the last imperialist war offered to the colonial slaves of the world, opening their eyes to the true nature of their masters, there was the great October Socialist

Revolution, which from its inception imperceptibly exercised a powerful influence on the enslaved nations of the world, awakening them from their centuries of torpor and making them conscious of their servitude and poverty—and at the same time of their potential might.

With the collapse of tsardom, there collapsed one of the most reactionary powers in Europe and Asia. Numerous forgotten peoples, which had vegetated within the realm of the old Russian Empire, received their freedom. The October Revolution made them the masters of their own destinies and united them with the other peoples of the former Russian Empire in the common work of socialist construction.

“By overthrowing the landlords and capitalists, the October Revolution broke the chains of national-colonial oppression and freed every single oppressed nation in this vast state from its yoke. The proletariat cannot emancipate itself without emancipating the oppressed nations. It is a characteristic trait of the October Revolution that it accomplished these national-colonial revolutions in the U.S.S.R. not under the flag of national animosity and inter-national conflict, but under the flag of mutual confidence and fraternal amity between the workers and peasants of the nationalities of the U.S.S.R.: not in the name of *nationalism*, but in the name of *internationalism*.

“It is precisely because the national-colonial revolutions in our country were accomplished under the leadership of the proletariat and under the banner of internationalism that the pariah nations, the slave nations, have for the *first time*

in the history of mankind risen to the level of nations that are *really* free and *really* equal, and are setting a contagious example for the oppressed nations of the whole world.

“This means that the October Revolution has *ushered in* a new era, the era of *colonial* revolutions, which are being conducted in the *oppressed countries* of the world in *alliance* with the proletariat and *under the leadership* of the proletariat.” (*Ibid.*, pp. 253-54.)

The peoples of the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Crimea and the Volga, who under tsardom had been exploited both by the government and by their own feudal lords, who had been denied every opportunity of education, and in many cases even the right to use their own language, began, with the help of the working class of the more advanced Soviet Republics, to build up a new life which enabled them freely to develop their national culture. This national emancipation of the oppressed peoples of the former Russian Empire bore a unique historic character, owing to the fact that in the course of this process, not only were the old exploiting classes abolished, but—in contradistinction to the original process of evolution of the peoples of the West into nations—also irrevocably abolished was the very possibility of any exploiting classes again arising. The Soviet Government enabled the peoples of Central Asia to build up their own industry and increase the fruits of their agricultural labor with the help of extensive modern irrigation works and the application

of modern technique. They were able to affect this technical revolution in the process of building up a socialist society. The peoples of the Caucasus could proceed to the exploitation of their mineral wealth without the fruits of their labor being seized by rapacious capitalists.

The theoreticians of the Second International had been preaching for years that the "immaturity" of capitalist development in old Russia rendered the building of socialism in that country impossible. But the October Revolution has not only led capitalist Russia to socialism; it has also drawn economically primitive peoples, some of whom still led a nomadic existence, into the work of socialist construction. The Soviet Government has not only introduced the modern tractor to the nomad peoples, but has enabled them to pass from their patriarchal manner of life, not by the round-about way of capitalist wage slavery, but directly to socialist forms of labor and life.

At the same time, the victorious October Revolution released the nations of Asia living outside of Russia from an oppressive yoke. Tsarist Russia had for decades played the role of gendarme in Asia in the service of Western capitalism, suppressing every liberation movement by force of arms. For many decades tsarist armies had occupied a large part of Manchuria and North China. The tsarist government had played a major part in all schemes for the partitioning of China among the various groups of imperialist powers.

In the Near East, it was mainly

the Iranian people who stood in constant fear of their reactionary Northern neighbor. The tsarist government had repressed the progressive movement among the Iranian intelligentsia; prior to the World War it had, in conjunction with the British imperialists, divided Iran into Northern and Southern spheres of influence.

In the World War, the reactionary Russian government, with the consent of England, had striven to subjugate Turkey and seize Constantinople. With the October Revolution, all these people who had been constantly menaced by tsardom, were able to breathe freely. The policy of conquest and enslavement of neighboring peoples gave place to a socialist policy of helpful friendship towards all the nations of the East. The young Soviet Republic supported the struggle for liberation waged by Turkey, under Kemal Pasha's leadership, against the schemes of conquest of the Entente, by supplying her with arms, by economic assistance and by its great influence. It lent the Iranian people its moral support when they resisted economic strangulation by the foreign oil concerns.

The October Revolution supported the Mongolian people in their struggle against the White Guard bands which were ravaging Mongolia with fire and sword. With the fraternal help of the Soviet state, the Mongolian people were able to set up the Mongolian People's Republic and to make considerable economic and cultural progress. When, in recent years, the Japanese militarists repeatedly attempted to violate the

frontiers of the Mongolian People's Republic by force of arms, they encountered the united resistance of the Mongolian people and the Soviet Union, the latter punctiliously observing its contractual obligation to lend military support to the Mongolian people.

The bourgeois-democratic revolution in France, by its very nature and the conditions of the time, had chiefly drawn the peoples of the West into its orbit. The great October Socialist Revolution, on the other hand, which has not only sponsored the greatest aims ever professed by mankind, but has put them into effect, has exercised its awakening and liberating influence, not only on the workers of the capitalist countries, but also on the peoples of Asia, Africa and South America, whom imperialism had condemned to slavery and servitude.

The colonial lords and their Laborite and Social-Democratic menials howled, livid with fear, that "Moscow agents" were at work trying to incite the colonial slaves against the "West." Great libertarian ideas like those of the October Revolution need no artificial propaganda tricks or "agents" to exercise their influence over the masses. The colonial peoples waited with bated breath for every piece of news about the great work of socialist liberation which was taking place on the territory of the former Russian Empire. It was impoverished peasants, workers and coolies that spread it far and wide. In spite of all the attempts of the colonial lords to bar and persecute them, the

ideas of the October Revolution made their way across the Gobi Desert, the Pamirs and the Caucasian Mountains into the minds of the outcasts of this earth. In the Chinese coolie, who was despised as a beast of burden by his colonial master and lived a life of endless misery, the October Revolution aroused the consciousness of his own human dignity. To the starving workers and peasants of India, the Near East and Indonesia, the October Revolution was a source of moral strength in their struggle against the yoke of foreign exploitation.

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One illuminating example of its policy of brotherly aid to the nations enslaved and exploited by imperialism is the attitude of the Soviet state towards the Chinese people. The Soviet Government tore up all the unequal treaties which the tsarist government had imposed on China; it treated China as a complete equal, disclaimed the special privileges which the tsarist, like the other imperialist, governments, had extorted for its citizens in China, and renounced the Boxer indemnities. The Soviet Government was the first and only government to negotiate with the representatives of the Chinese people as equals, and this was the principle by which it has been guided in all its subsequent relations with the Chinese people. For the first time, China found herself dealing with a foreign power which, unlike the governments of the imperialist states, was not constantly on the

watch to take advantage of every opportunity to plunder the Chinese people. The Chinese intelligentsia found in the Soviet state a true friend in their aspirations for freedom. The profound sympathy which the Chinese people conceived from the very beginning for the land of the October Revolution found eloquent expression in the message which Sun Yat-sen, the leader of progressive China, sent from his death-bed in 1925 to the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R.:

"While I am here laid low by a sickness against which human skill is helpless, my thoughts are turned to you and to the fate of my country. You are at the head of a union of free republics—the heritage which the immortal Lenin bequeathed to the oppressed peoples. With the aid of this heritage the victims of imperialism will inevitably achieve their liberation from the international system which since ancient times has been rooted in slavery, wars and injustice. I am leaving behind me a party which, as I have always hoped, will be connected with you in the historic work of finally emancipating China and other exploited countries from this imperialist system. . . . With that end in view I have instructed the party to keep in constant contact with you. I firmly believe that the assistance which you have rendered my country up to now will remain constant. In bidding you farewell, dear comrades, I express the hope that the day is near when the U.S.S.R. will welcome mighty and free China as a friend and ally, and that in the great struggles for the liberation of the oppressed peoples of the world both allies will march side by side to victory."

Under the influence of the ideas of the October Revolution, the anti-imperialist movement in China gained in breadth, depth and consciousness of purpose. It became a real movement of the Chinese masses. The overthrow of the reactionary Manchu dynasty and the establishment of the Chinese Republic in 1911 had been prepared and carried out under the leadership of the Chinese intelligentsia and progressive military circles. The revolution of 1911 had no durable value, however, for it was unable to release the creative forces of China's worker and peasant masses. It was largely due to the ideas of the October Revolution that the Chinese national movement in the post-war period won the conscious participation of the Chinese masses, the workers and peasants. The horror which this unexpected turn of affairs awakened among imperialist circles in China was eloquently voiced by the *China Weekly Review* of Shanghai (August 1, 1925):

"Human life is the cheapest thing in Asia. . . . Therefore, it came as a distinct shock to most foreigners . . . when students so suddenly flared up to support the laborers. . . ."

In 1925, big strikes, involving hundreds of thousands of Chinese laborers, broke out in Shanghai and Canton against the brutal treatment meted out to them by the Japanese and British capitalists, and against the bloody massacre of peaceful demonstrations by foreign police and troops. The laborers

linked their demand for decent human working and living conditions with the aim of liberating China from the imperialist exploiters. These events were significant of the turn of affairs in Chinese life noted by the newspaper just quoted. From now on the workers of China were united with the progressive intelligentsia in an alliance which, despite many vicissitudes, has proved to be durable.

The victorious march of the South China army to the North, sweeping away one after another reactionary militarist in the pay of foreign imperialists, was only made possible thanks to the enthusiastic support which the onmarching Kuomintang armies met with among the masses of the Chinese people. The young Communist Party of China, which had drawn the great lesson from the October Revolution that a cause that relies upon the people and their creative initiative is invincible, contributed very largely to the growth of the national movement in breadth and depth. Even more effective is the influence of the October Revolution in the struggle of liberation that national China is waging now against the Japanese invaders.

The young Soviet state had to defend itself against the attacks of the most powerful imperialist states and their hirelings. Cut off from the outside world, and with its economic life profoundly shattered, the Soviet state was able, despite all the difficulties of its situation, to beat off the attacks of the invaders and drive them out of the country. It was able to develop this mighty

power of defense because the October Revolution was the cause of over one hundred million workers and peasants. And if today national China is putting up against the modern armies of Japanese imperialism a fighting power which contradicts the earlier witticisms over the supposed military weakness of the Chinese people, it is above all because national China, despite reactionary resistance, has recognized the importance of mobilizing the broad masses of the people and imbuing them with the will to victory. It is essential for successful leadership of the struggle for national liberation which the Communist Party of China has stimulated to propose definite reforms to improve the condition of the workers and peasants and ensure the democratization of national China.

As in the sphere of military defense against the invaders, so in the sphere of economic progress, national China is steadily developing the initiative and devoted effort of the masses. Evidence of this is furnished by the heroism displayed by the Chinese workers and peasants in the building of new roads and railways and in the erection of new industrial plants in Inner China, as well as by the growing number of producing and peasants' cooperatives that are being formed by the masses themselves. It was the October Revolution that liberated the creative energies of the Russian workers and peasants—which tsardom had left unutilized and had condemned to atrophy—and placed them at the service of socialist construction.

Thereby it effectively demonstrated to the Chinese and other economically backward peoples that the masses can perform great things in the economic sphere when they are working in their own interests.

It is the great historic merit of the Communist Party of China that it has placed the rich experiences of the October Revolution at the service of the Chinese people's struggle for liberation. In view of the different economic and political conditions, the immediate aims of the Communist Party of China differ from those that were achieved by the October Revolution. The aim of the Communist Party of China is to work hand in hand with the Chinese people and with China's biggest political party, the Kuomintang, to save the Chinese people from being plunged into colonial slavery, which would prevent all free development for a long time to come. But it speaks eloquently for the comprehensiveness and depth of the experiences of the October Revolution that the Chinese people can go on drawing valuable lessons from them in their own struggle for existence.

The Communist Party of China was born amid the post-war revolutionary movements. Together with the Chinese working class, and armed with the lessons of Marxism-Leninism carried to the East by the October Revolution, the Chinese Communist Party was the actuating and organizing force of the liberation movement of the Chinese people. The initiative displayed by the Communist Party of China in organizing the anti-imperialist move-

ment in the decade succeeding the October Revolution, and, later, during the building up of the national united front against Japanese imperialism, has laid its impress on the modern history of the Chinese people.

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The October Revolution has also had a great influence on the development of the struggle for liberation of the people of India. In 1853, Karl Marx, with the prophetic eye of genius, foretold the revolutionizing effect which the breaking down of India's peasant and artisan communities by the invasion of British capitalism would have. The capitalist development of India not only undermined an ancient form of society; it also paved the way for the invasion of modern ideas and for the gradual emancipation of India's intellectual life from the mysticism and obscurantism of the old society. The October Revolution, by putting the ideas of socialism into effect, helped greatly to accelerate this process.

The Indian national movement, which formerly lived almost exclusively in a world of archaic ideas, is now re-echoing to discussions and disputes over Marxism. The number of young Indian intellectuals who are seeking in Marxism-Leninism an answer to India's problems is steadily growing. To the reactionary capitalists and landlords, who find themselves faced with a rapidly growing workers' and peasants' movement, "the name of Marx has become a bogey," as Nehru, one of the leaders of the

Indian national movement, once put it. The growing strength of the working class movement in India is moving the imperialist bureaucracy to issue emergency legislation, on the grounds of the growth of Communist propaganda and influence, especially among the industrial population of certain cities. (This, for example, was the argument used to justify the enactment of the Public Safety Bill in 1928.)

During the notorious Meerut trial of the Indian and British trade unionists that dragged out from 1930 to 1933, the prosecution quoted long extracts from *The Communist Manifesto* and made furious attacks on the October Revolution, while the possession of a copy of Marx's *Capital* by one of the accused was considered sufficient evidence on which to convict him of treason against British colonial rule.

The trade union movement in India sprang up after the first World War. The official report of the Whitley Commission, which enquired into Indian labor problems in 1931, states:

"Prior to the winter of 1918-19 a strike was a rare occurrence in Indian industry. . . . Lacking leadership and organization, and deeply imbued with a passive outlook on life, the vast majority of industrial workers regarded the return to the village as the only alternative. . . . The end of the war saw an immediate change. . . . The main cause was the realization of the potentialities of the strike . . . and this was assisted by the emergence of the trade union organizers, by the education which the war had given to the masses. . . ."

Indeed, neither the savage campaign against the October Revolution nor the attempts to erect an intellectual barrier between India and the outer world were able to prevent enlightenment and the new spirit from penetrating the minds of the Indian workers.

The post-war world also witnessed a rapid development of the Indian peasant movement. In the years immediately following the World War, and especially in 1930 and 1931, the movement for national liberation received a powerful stimulus from the increasing influx into it of Indian peasants. These peasants, however, did not confine themselves to a struggle against imperialist rule, but fought for their immediate interests by refusing to pay rent and taxes in protest to their exploitation by the landlords, who were in the service of the imperialist rulers. The imperialist press in India hastened to brand all these peasant movements as Communistic, by which they only helped to rouse—although unintentionally—the interest of the peasant masses in the ideas of the October Revolution.

The great national movements of liberation of post-war times in India were marked by an influx of large sections of the people, who for the first time were putting up an active struggle for their rights. The Indian national leaders, who believed that India's welfare lay in a return to the primitive relations of pre-capitalist times, steadily yielded place to more progressive elements. The new ideas made their influence steadily felt. It was in

effect an ideological revolution when, in 1929, the Committee of the Indian National Congress made the following declaration:

"In the opinion of this Committee, the great poverty and misery of the Indian people are due not only to the foreign exploitation of India but also to the economic structure of society, which the alien rulers support so that their exploitation may continue. In order, therefore, to remove this poverty and misery and to ameliorate the condition of the Indian masses, it is essential to make revolutionary changes in the present economic and social structure of society and to remove the gross inequalities."

This declaration was indicative of the fact that the Indian national movement could no longer ignore the demands and aims of the growing revolutionary working class movement, which in its turn was influenced by the ideas of the October Revolution. In the post-war years the young Indian working class succeeded in becoming an important factor in the movement for liberation of the Indian people.

India is a land of antagonisms and conflicts artificially fomented between the various sections of the population and the various religious groups by the imperialist rulers. The Indian army and the native police are almost exclusively recruited from among definite nationalities which the British imperialists regard as a reliable buttress of their system. A multitude of small principalities are artificially kept alive in order to prevent the Indian people from politically unit-

ing. Bloody conflicts between Moslems and Hindus are in the eyes of the imperialist rulers a welcome means of diverting the energies of the Indian masses. But precisely because of India's internal disunity, the eyes of the progressive intellectuals and of the working class movement of India turn towards the Land of Socialism, which, by the October Revolution, has abolished the supremacy of the Russian nation and the favored position of several other big nationalities, which was coupled with the ruthless oppression and enslavement of the rest, and has welded together the peoples of this vast realm into a fraternal union of equal nations.

Once again have the Indian people been plunged against their own wishes into an imperialist war for a redivision of the world. But this time the British imperialists at once encountered widespread resistance among the Indian masses. The workers of Bombay responded to the declaration of war by calling a general strike. The imperialist bureaucracy is ordering the arrest of Communists and active champions of freedom. It is even prohibiting verbal opposition to the war. That is clear evidence of the fact that the Indian people have learned a lot from the experiences of the first World War and of the post-war period and will prosecute the struggle for their own emancipation with greater energy than ever.

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The post-war period has witnessed great liberation movements in the Near East and in Africa.

The severance of large regions from the former Turkish empire created new problems. The Arabian peoples of these countries demanded the fulfilment of the promises that had been made to them during the World War. The British imperialists had promised them a united Arabia as a reward for the revolt against Turkish rule. But afterwards the British and French imperialists fell out among themselves over the division of the booty. Iraq was made a British protectorate; the oilfields and cheap labor power of the Arabian population became a source of vast profits to the British imperialists. Palestine was also brought under British sway, on the pretext that the Jews must be guaranteed a national home. Syria became a French mandated territory. When the promises made during the war were broken, big liberation movements developed in these countries, not infrequently assuming the form of armed revolts. In Syria, French forces bombarded large towns, such as Damascus, and reduced them to ruins. In Palestine, the British forces carried on a protracted war against the Arabian inhabitants. The bitter experience of the Arabs is of particular significance today, when both the Italians and the British are handing out new promissory notes to the peoples of the Near East.

The Negro population of large parts of Africa likewise conceived the determination, after the World War, to shake off the yoke of colonial slavery. The Negro workers exploited in the mines of South Africa have fought during this

period for the abolition of their slavish condition of work and life. The Negroes of South Africa have joined together in a powerful movement, which is demanding from the white minority governments the abolition of the oppressive and coercive measures which fetter the Negro workers to the capitalists and landlords. The great and new feature in the ideas of the October Revolution was that they proclaimed the same indefeasible rights for all human beings, irrespective of race and color, and put this into practice on one-sixth of the territory of the globe.

It was therefore only natural that the October Revolution should likewise appeal to the Negroes of the United States, who, living as they do in the most advanced of the capitalist countries, are all the more conscious of their virtual disfranchised condition. Bourgeois democracy in America is not willing to protect over twelve million of her citizens from daily humiliation at the hands of white chauvinists, from lynch law and from discrimination in every sphere of life. In large sections of the country it virtually excludes them from all participation in political life. In the cotton areas of the United States the Negroes are the virtual serfs of the planters. The Negro worker is not only discriminated against in labor conditions, but is also prevented by reactionary trade union bureaucrats from uniting with the white workers. It therefore needed no outside influence to direct the gaze of the Negro population of the United States towards the land of

victorious socialism, in whose Constitution are inscribed the words:

"Equality of rights of citizens of the U.S.S.R., irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an indefeasible law."

Paul Robeson, the American Negro singer and actor, has given expression in a most human way to the sentiments of the Negroes towards the Land of Socialism by sending his boy to school in the Soviet Union, in order to save him from the constant humiliations to which the Negroes in the United States are subjected at the hands of the white chauvinists.

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Similarly, the October Revolution has taught many a great lesson to the countries that are under the economic sway of imperialism. The South American countries, for example, are economically dependent on imperialist states. Their most important branches of industry and sources of raw material are in the hands of foreign capitalist groups. The October Revolution has shown that an economically backward country can throw off the fetters not only of native capital but also of foreign capital and build up a prosperous economic life by its own efforts. If the masses of the dependent countries are today demanding measures to destroy the all-powerful influence of alien capitalist groups in the economic life of their country, if, for example, the Mexican Government has proceeded to nationalize the oilfields hitherto be-

longing to foreign capitalists, this is due to the will of the people to determine the economic development of their country themselves.

The ideas of the October Revolution have not only stimulated the movement for liberation among the oppressed and dependent peoples; they have for the first time awakened a feeling of solidarity with the colonial peoples among the working masses of the imperialist states. Even in the days when its leaders had not yet completely deserted to the camp of the imperialists and chauvinists, the Second International made no attempt to interest the workers of the imperialist countries in the struggle for liberation of the oppressed peoples.

"The Irish, the Hungarians, the Poles, the Finns, the Serbs, and several other nationalities in Europe made up the last of disfranchised nations in whose destinies the heroes of the Second International were interested. The countless millions of Asiatic and African peoples who were suffering under the yoke of national oppression in its crudest and most horrible form usually remained outside of their field of vision. They could not make up their minds to put white and black, 'cultured' and 'uncultured' on the same plane." (Joseph Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. I, p. 64, International Publishers, New York.)

Under the influence of the October Revolution the workers of the imperialist states became increasingly conscious of the fact that their own destiny was closely bound up with that of the colonial peoples. Significant of the change of senti-

ment was the open sympathy which the more advanced section of the French working class movement showed during the Moroccan War and the revolts in Syria and Indo-China for the efforts for emancipation of the peoples of these countries. The Communist Party of France has from its inception carried on an unswerving struggle against the colonial policy of the French Government, at a time when leaders of the French Socialist Party were entrusted by the imperialist bourgeoisie with high posts in the colonial countries and were proving themselves in no way different from their predecessors in their treatment of the colonial population.

It was the Communist Party of France that inside parliament and out denounced the abuses in the French colonies and demanded democratic rights and human conditions for the colonial population.

Symptoms of a similar change are to be observed in England, although the official trade union and Labor Party leaders have done their utmost to inculcate imperialist ideas into the minds of the English workers. The so-called Labor Governments headed by MacDonald (1924 and 1929-31) were entrusted by the British imperialists with the shameful task of gagging and forcibly suppressing the movement for liberation of the Indian and other peoples of the British Empire. It was, therefore, all the more surprising when the Trade Union Congress, in 1925, adopted a resolution by 3,082,000 votes against 79,000 which declared:

"This Trades Union Congress believes that the domination of non-British peoples by the British Government is a form of capitalist exploitation having for its object the securing for British capitalists (1) of cheap sources of raw materials; (2) the right to exploit cheap and unorganized labor and to use the competition of that labor to degrade the workers' standards in Great Britain.

"It declares its complete opposition to imperialism, and resolves: (1) to support the workers in all parts of the British Empire, to organize the trade unions and political parties in order to further their interests, and (2) to support the right of all peoples in the British Empire to self-determination, including the right to choose complete separation from the Empire."

This was the first time in history that the representative body of the British labor movement firmly and distinctly proclaimed—against the wishes of the trade union leaders, it is true—the identity of the interests of the working class movement of England with those of her colonial peoples who are striving for their freedom. It need scarcely be mentioned, however, that the English trade unions and Labor Party leaders continued in succeeding years to pursue a policy that ran directly counter to this resolution, and which therefore corresponded all the closer to the interests of the imperialists.

The adoption of this resolution coincided in time with the growing activity of the British working class, which reached its culmination in the general strike and the great

miners' strike of 1926; which is proof that the development of the class struggle in the mother country tends to lend added strength to the sentiment of solidarity with the oppressed nations. It was the militant trade unionists who joined in this opposition to the reactionary leaders and who were responsible for this first manifestation of a new, anti-imperialist attitude in the British working class movement. From its inception, the Communist Party of Great Britain has been vigorously combating the imperialist ideology in the British labor movement.

Solidarity with the oppressed nations found expression in the moral and material support given by the class-conscious workers of Europe and America to the anti-imperialist movement of the Chinese people in the years 1925-37. It finds expression today in the help given to the Chinese people in the form of medical supplies for the wounded Chinese soldiers and in the boycott of Japanese goods, which has become particularly widespread in America. Lastly, it is likewise symptomatic of the new spirit in the labor movement that a large number of trade unions in the United States especially symbolized by the C.I.O. unions now accept Negroes into their ranks, which the chauvinistic bureaucrats of the American Federation of Labor have been opposing for decades.

The new spirit of genuine internationalism which the October Revolution has awakened in the working class of the whole world, and the intensified urge for freedom

among the colonial peoples constitute a guarantee that the anti-imperialist struggle will continue to grow and to spread. The present imperialist war is a new and big strain not only on the relations between the working class and capital, but also, and to an even greater degree, on imperialist rule over the colonial peoples. Now, after a year of war, it is already clear that the colonial peoples are to play an even greater part in this war than in the last. The war is in part being waged directly in the colonies, and their resources and man power are being drawn upon to a much greater extent for the prosecution of the war.

The British imperialists are hastily building engineering and armament industries in India so as to be the better able to defend their colonial possessions against Italy and Germany. But the building of these industries is bound to strengthen the Indian working class, the most progressive class in Indian society and the one most conscious of its purpose. In the Sudan, the British are arming Ethiopian tribes to wage war against Italian rule, after England had herself abandoned Ethiopia to the tender mercies of Italian imperialism. In their propaganda among the Arabs, the British and Italians are mutually accusing each other of the most heinous crimes, and are thus helping to open the eyes of their subjugated peoples to every form of colonial slavery. The French colonial empire has become the arena of a bitter armed struggle between the Vichy government and the Anglophile supporters of Gen-

eral de Gaulle, in which the inhabitants of these colonies are being drawn. Is this not bound to strengthen the will of these peoples to become masters in their own house at last?

The French administration in Indo-China has conferred on the Japanese militarists the "right" to occupy a part of the country and to use it as a base of operations against the Chinese people. What impression must the inhabitants of Indo-China get of the "greatness" of their colonial masters when the latter turn Indo-China into a theater of hostilities on behalf of another power?

Thus the present war will, as time goes on, more and more corroborate what Lenin said at the Second World Congress of the Communist International about the instability of the rule of imperialism:

"World imperialism must fall when the revolutionary onslaught of the exploited and oppressed workers in each county, overcoming the resistance of the petty-bourgeois elements and the influence of the

small body forming the labor aristocracy, unites with the revolutionary onslaught of hundreds of millions of people who up to now have been outside of history and have been merely regarded as the object of history."

Imperialism is obliged, as Joseph Stalin has pointed out, to build railways, factories and industrial and commercial centers in the colonies; whereby it is inevitably begetting its own gravediggers, in the shape of a native proletariat and a native intelligentsia filled with national sentiments and a yearning for national freedom. The imperialist war is accelerating this dialectical process: the oppressed peoples, mobilized industrially and militarily for the defense of their masters, are learning step by step to champion their own interests against the imperialists. Still reserves of imperialism today, they will not remain content with this role, and will steadily come to see that the pledge of their national liberation lies in an alliance with the revolutionary working class.

PROBLEMS OF THE IMPERIALIST WAR IN AFRICA

BY L. TAYLOR

THE present imperialist war in Europe is being fought in two theaters. The one embraces the British Isles, North and West Germany and the areas occupied by the Germans: Holland, Belgium, Northern France, Norway, and part of Denmark. The other embraces the Mediterranean, the Northern and Northeastern part of Africa and part of Asia Minor.

In both these theaters of war it is against England, or, rather, the British Empire, that her imperialist rivals, Germany and Italy, are aiming their combined blows. Thus, a close political as well as strategical connection exists between these two geographically so widely separated arenas. While the aim of the German operations against the British Isles is to paralyze their function as the economic, political and organizing center of the British Empire, the aim of Italy is to cut England's route to India through the Mediterranean and to threaten her positions on the Suez Canal, in North Africa and in the Near East.

When Italy entered the war on June 11, 1940, the collapse of France had already begun, and her complete capitulation that followed

soon after, on June 22, undoubtedly signified a considerable improvement in Italy's strategic position in the Mediterranean and in North Africa. For whereas Italy's task in the original German-Italian plan of operations was to hold in check the French forces in the Alps and in North Africa, to prevent the dispatch of materials and men to France from Africa, and to hamper the movements of the powerful British and French fleets in the Mediterranean, now her task has been greatly simplified: today she is able to direct her fighting forces, released by the capitulation of France, wholly and entirely against England, which is carrying on the fight.

Nevertheless, the results of the war in the Mediterranean, in North and Northeast Africa and on the coast of Asia Minor so far have not been overwhelming. Italy has been able seriously to hamper the movements of the British fleet between Gibraltar, the Suez and Aden; she has also succeeded, thanks to her supremacy in the air, in ensuring her sea communications with Libya and hence the dispatch of troops and munitions to an area

which offers a grave menace to Britain's position in Egypt; lastly, the Italian troops have been able to record certain territorial gains, especially in British Somaliland, which they have occupied, in Kenya and in the Sudan. Nevertheless, neither in the Mediterranean nor in the North African theaters of war has Italy succeeded in seriously menacing Britain's positions on the Suez Canal and in the Near East.

In view of a probable Italian attack on the Suez Canal, Great Britain has in the past few weeks been concentrating considerable forces in the strategically most important sections, especially in Egypt and Palestine, but also in the Sudan and Kenya, as well as in Aden-Hadramaut. Thus, apart from obstacles of a topographical and climatic character, Italy's advance on the Suez Canal will encounter strong military resistance.

Further, German-Italian plans—as the conversations between Von Ribbentrop, Ciano and Suñer show—aim at using the Iberian Peninsula as a jumping-off ground for an attack on French North Africa and French Equatorial Africa. Spain is demanding the return of Gibraltar, and on June 14 she occupied Tangier, the most important strategic point in French Morocco. By her possession of Tangier and Ceuta, Spain dominates the coast facing Gibraltar. After Suñer's appointment as Foreign Minister, and after the meeting between Hitler and Franco, it is to be presumed that Spain will put no obstacles in the way of the plans of the axis powers.

There are many signs to show

that the center of gravity of hostilities is about to be shifted to the African theater of war.

* * *

What is the significance of Africa to the imperialists?

The second largest continent in the world (with an area of 11,500,000 square miles), Africa represents a huge territory, thrice the size of Europe, but with a total population of only about 150,000,000. More than one-third of this vast continent consists of desert, the Sahara alone having an area of 3,500,000 square miles.

The importance of Africa to world imperialism lies both in its rich natural resources and in its peculiar geographical position. Tunis, Algiers, Morocco, the Belgian Congo and South Africa abound in mineral wealth. While French North Africa possesses vast deposits of phosphorus, copper and iron ore, Central Africa is rich in gold, copper, tin, zinc and manganese. Richest of all in mineral wealth is the Union of South Africa and Rhodesia, which contain the largest gold and diamond deposits in the world as well as huge reserves of coal, iron, copper and platinum. Generally speaking, the mineral wealth of Africa is still inadequately surveyed, especially in Ethiopia and the Sudan, where large mineral deposits are believed to exist. Of outstanding importance are Africa's mighty rivers (Nile, Congo, Niger and Zambezi), whose potential power resources are estimated at about 190,000,000 h.p.

Of the vegetable life, in which

Africa is extraordinarily rich and whose cultivation on a large scale promises enormous potentialities of development, prime mention should be made of the world raw materials, and other supplies: cotton, rubber, gum, copal, hemp, oilseed and oil, coffee, cocoa, timber, cork, spices, tanning material, tobacco, wine and sugar. Africa also provides a considerable share of the world's supplies of animals and animal products, such as sheep, wool, hides and ivory.

In the struggle of the world imperialists for Africa, the unique geographical position of this continent has always played an important part. Through the Mediterranean, North Africa is closely connected both with Southern Europe and the Near East. The Straits of Gibraltar, which separate the Iberian peninsula from North Africa, are only 14 kilometers* wide at their narrowest part. The Appennine peninsula, and especially Sicily, approach very close to Africa, as does also the Balkan peninsula, both directly and by the connecting land strip through Asia Minor, which is of great strategic importance.

What renders Africa's geographical position even more important is the fact that two world trade routes of vital significance to the British Empire follow the line of its coast. While the route through the Straits of Gibraltar, the Suez and Aden is one-third shorter than the road to India and Australia around the African coast, it can be seriously menaced by any of Britain's rivals

in the Mediterranean; whereas the old route round the Cape of Good Hope, although the longer, is by far the safer. But the longer distance around the Cape of Good Hope has the serious defect of reducing the turnover of cargo space, equivalent to about a 15 per cent loss of tonnage, which is already being keenly felt by Great Britain in the present war. The distance from London to Bombay, for example, is 7,190 statute miles, and from London to Singapore 9,505 statute miles; but via Cape Town these distances are increased to 12,659 and 16,455 statute miles respectively. British oil tankers used to make the voyage from the Persian Gulf to England through the Suez Canal in about twenty-five days; today they require over forty days.

For the world imperialists, Africa constitutes primarily a huge agrarian hinterland, a source of raw material and a market, as well as a highly profitable sphere of capital export (for the construction of roads, railways, harbor works, power stations and public works and the exploitation of the vast mineral resources).

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It was only in the concluding decades of the last century that Africa really became an object of contention among the imperialist powers. Before that it was a scene of sanguinary slave hunts, of the unscrupulous burning and destruction of whole areas and the extermination of whole tribes by the "superior white race"; but now, in the age of imperialism, it has become

* A kilometer equals approximately five-eighths of a mile.—Ed.

the arena of a struggle for raw materials and markets, for cheap labor power and for strategical bases along the world's most important trade routes.

The imperialist voracity with which Africa was literally torn to pieces at the end of the last century was brought about by two causes: first, by the fact that all the other continents were already closed to further imperialist expansion, and, second, by the fact that, with the national unification of Germany and Italy, two new imperialist powers appeared on the scene and began to demand their "place in the sun."

The history of the struggle of the imperialist powers for Africa is clearly marked by the following phases: the phase 1882-1902, or the period of struggle between Great Britain and France for hegemony in Africa; the phase 1902 to the World War of 1914-18, marked by an understanding between Great Britain and France in Africa and their combined and open conflict with Germany, leading to the loss of Germany's colonies in Africa in the World War; and, lastly, the phase 1918-39, ending with the outbreak of the second imperialist war.

In the first of these phases, in which France was anxious to compensate herself in Africa for her losses in the Franco-German War of 1870-71, and above all to set her foot firmly in North Africa, she necessarily came into collision everywhere with Great Britain, who was chiefly concerned to strengthen and secure her strategic hold on India by seizing all the major lines of approach to that country (hence

the slogans: Cairo-Cape Town and Cairo-Calcutta). The mastery of the Mediterranean, and especially the possession of Tangier, Biserte and Tunis was therefore for a long time a subject of contention, not only between British and French imperialism, but also between French and Italian imperialism, both Bismarck and England being very skillful in directing Italy's greedy gaze towards France.

The signal for the final dismemberment of Africa was given by France when she occupied Tunis in 1881. The immediate consequence was not only the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, which had been suddenly plunged into the vortex of world politics by the opening of the Suez Canal (1879), but also the conclusion of the Three-Power Pact between Germany, Italy and Austria-Hungary.

That Germany and Italy were able to gain a foothold in Africa was largely due to the acute struggle between Great Britain and France for hegemony in Africa, a struggle which was brought to the verge of open war by the Fashoda incident of 1898. Thus, in order to create a counterweight to French aspirations in the Red Sea, Great Britain allowed Italy in 1885 to occupy the Egyptian port of Massaua, which was to serve as the starting point in the creation of an Italian colonial empire in North-eastern Africa. Similarly, Kaiser Wilhelm skillfully exploited the difficulties encountered by Great Britain in South Africa, Egypt and Central Asia to build up a German colonial empire in Africa. On the

other hand, the colonial appetites of the German and Italian imperialists, uncommonly whetted by several territorial acquisitions in Africa, contributed no little to a reconciliation between Great Britain and France.

But, in particular, it was Germany's effective competition in the world market, her intense naval construction and her far-reaching plans in the Near East, which had already taken palpable shape in the project for the Berlin-Baghdad railway, that induced Great Britain to make a thorough revision in the first place of her African policy. By their treaty of March 21, 1899, Great Britain and France reached agreement over the division of their spheres of influence in Africa: England shifted the center of her interests to the Eastern and Southern parts of Africa (Egypt, Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa), whereas France welded together Northwestern and Western Africa with French Equatorial Africa to form a solid colonial empire stretching from the Mediterranean to the Congo.

Although, after this agreement, the imperialist antagonisms between Great Britain and France still continued in latent form, in African affairs the two powers acted in conjunction, especially in everything that concerned Germany. A certain exception to this was Italy, which, owing to the Anglo-French antagonisms still operative in the Mediterranean, was energetically wooed by both sides.

World politics in the decade immediately preceding the outbreak

of the World War were dominated by what was known as the "Morocco crisis." The "Morocco problem" represented an inextricable tangle of imperialist contradictions—between England and France, on the one hand, and Germany, Italy and Spain on the other. Germany was particularly anxious to get a foothold in Morocco. German imperialism, hungry for loot, was already crouching for the "panther's spring" in Morocco and was feverishly active in the Near East and in South Africa, and this in the end brought together, not only Great Britain and France, but also Italy and Spain. The secret treaty concluded by Great Britain, France, Italy and Spain in 1904 placed a padlock on further German expansion in Africa. Incidentally, it was this secret treaty—apart from the traditional antagonism between Italy and Austria-Hungary—which contributed largely to Italy's desertion of Germany in the last World War.

Subsequent developments up to the outbreak of the World War proceeded entirely in accordance with the laws of imperialist logic: Britain was able to secure her route to India *via* Gibraltar, Malta, the Suez and Aden, by the compromise with France; at the same time she encouraged Italy's and Spain's colonial appetites in order to create a counterweight to France in the Mediterranean.

On the other hand, in order to drive a wedge both between Italy and Germany and between Italy and Great Britain, France, by her treaties with Italy of 1902 and 1904,

allowed the latter a free hand in Tripoli and turned her gaze towards Great Britain's spheres of interests in East Africa.

In 1911, Italy took advantage of this unique situation to launch a war of conquest on Turkey, which resulted in her acquiring Tripoli and Cirenaica (today known as Libya). The occupation of the greater part of Morocco and the Moroccan west coast by France in 1912, and especially the World War, led in the end to the final partition of Africa.

After the World War, the colonial possessions of the European Powers in Africa were as follows:

	<i>Area Sq. Km.</i>	<i>Population Millions</i>
France	11,540	43.9
England ..	10,000 (approximate)	50.0
Belgium ..	2,410	17.5
Portugal ..	2,100	7.7
Italy	1,590	1.7
Spain	310	0.2
Ethiopia ..	1,120	10.0
Liberia (U.S.A.)	100	1.8
	29,170	132.8

Liberia and Ethiopia were the only parts of Africa that still ostensibly remained "independent" states. In the Negro Republic of Liberia, which had always been dependent on dollar imperialism, the United States intensively developed the growing of rubber, in order to break the British and Dutch monopoly on that product. As to Ethiopia, it was mainly the rivalry between Great Britain, Italy and France, as well as between the U. S. A. and Japan, that she had to

thank for having been able to preserve her independence until 1935.

Whereas the British and French possessions essentially formed integral land masses, interconnected by intensive railway and road construction, as well as by sea routes, Germany's possessions in Africa consisted of four (German East Africa, German Southwest Africa, the Cameroons and Togo) and Italy's of three (Tripolitania, Eritrea and Italian Somaliland) entirely separated colonies.

In the World War Germany lost her African colonies to England and France. Italy, who by the secret London Treaty of April 26, 1915, was also to expand her territorial possessions at the expense of Germany, was left empty-handed when it came to the great division of the spoils. It is the irony of history that Italy, who signed the Treaty of Versailles as one of the victor states, has today taken the side of Germany to fight against this treaty.

Before the World War, the imperialist struggle for Africa was essentially a struggle between England, France, Germany and Italy. After the World War, the United States and Japan joined the fray. That Spain, Portugal and Belgium possessed considerable territories in Africa was above all due to the rivalry of the imperialist Great Powers, who could not arrive at a unanimous understanding over these regions. As to Portugal's extensive colonial possessions in Africa, they have for a long time been British rather than Portuguese, for it was only thanks to her intimate political connection with Britain

that Portugal has been able to retain such considerable remnants of her former colonial power. Incidentally, in Britain's colonial transactions with Germany, the Portuguese colonies have often played the part of political small change; this was particularly the case in the convention of 1898, concluded at the time of the Fashoda incident, when Britain strove to reach an understanding with Germany, the edge of which would be directed against France and, more particularly, against Russia.

Like the Portuguese colonies, the Belgian Congo was a typical fruit of the acute rivalry among the Great Powers in Africa. The creation, at the Berlin Conference of 1884, at which Bismarck presided, of a "neutral" Congo state under the "sovereignty" of King Leopold II of Belgium was a compromise, arrived at by the Powers fighting for possession of Africa.

The post-war phase of the imperialist struggle for Africa was marked by the revival of the antagonisms between England and France, which especially found expression in the Near East, and from which Italy in the first instance was the direct beneficiary. Mussolini's neo-Italian imperialism, which in Africa and the Near East chiefly enjoyed the favor of dollar imperialism until 1930, after that was taken under the benevolent patronage of French imperialism, which again tried to divert its attention from Tunis to British spheres of interest, namely, to Ethiopia. A secret treaty concluded between Laval and Mussolini set the ball

rolling. Britain's policy of sanctions was frustrated both by the United States, which unconcernedly continued to ship oil to Italy, and by the passive resistance of France, which refused to place her harbors and repair yards at Great Britain's disposal in the event of a campaign against Italy. But, basically, the policy of sanctions broke down because of the internal contradictions within the camp of the British imperialists themselves, for a policy that might eventually bring the existence of the regime in Italy into question by no means suited the reactionary line of the Chamberlain clique.

With the war in Ethiopia, however, Egypt again became a focal point of world politics.

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It is primarily Egypt that is the strategical goal of the present war in Africa. Napoleon's idea that Egypt was the fulcrum for the lever that would lift the British Empire from its hinges has today, in an entirely different historical setting, acquired new significance.

In his *Outline of Economic Geography*, J. F. Horrabin speaks of the significance of Egypt to Britain, as follows:

"It is the safeguarding of this route, as well as the oil of Persia and Mesopotamia, which dictates Britain's vital interest in the whole 'Near-Eastern question.' The lands flanking that road must be brought and kept, directly or indirectly, under British control. The question who shall occupy Constantinople becomes a matter of British concern, for Constantinople is one of

the gateways of the Mediteranean, and the British 'road' runs through that sea. Above all, any real independence for Egypt is out of the question: for Egypt commands Suez—the key position of the whole route. . . .”

And Horrabin adds with melancholy sarcasm:

“People who want independence in the modern world should take care not to live in places commanding world trade routes—like Egypt or Ireland (unless, like the Turks, they can succeed in playing off against one another the jealousies of rival groups).”

Since she occupied Egypt in 1882, Great Britain has declared dozens and dozens of times that she would restore Egypt's national independence; but she has never kept her promise. True, in 1922 she formally abolished her protectorate over Egypt; nevertheless, she retained her actual supremacy by virtue of a clause in the treaty which stipulated that she reserved the defense of Egypt to herself. Egyptian national sentiments were particularly offended when, in 1924, Great Britain took over the administration of the Sudan, forced the Egyptian troops to withdraw, but compelled Egypt to go on paying for the Sudan. Finally, in 1936, Great Britain undertook to occupy only those zones in Egypt that were of military importance and to maintain only eleven thousand men on the Suez Canal. Today, according to many estimates which more or less tally with each other, the British army on Egyptian soil already amounts to two hundred and fifty

thousand men, recruited from English, Rhodesian, Indian and Australian units, and the number is being continually reinforced. Thus, willy-nilly, Egypt is being converted into a theater of war, although, under the Anglo-Egyptian treaty of alliance, she is not obliged to assist Britain in the event of war.

Italy's Egyptian policy is of long standing. It became particularly active when Mussolini's neo-Italian imperialism reverted to Crispi's idea of creating an African colonial empire and converting the Mediteranean into a *mare nostrum*, an Italian sea. Since then the activities of Italian agents have grown more intense not only in Syria, in the Mosul region, in Ethiopia and in the region of Lake Tana, but, and chiefly, among Ibn Saud's Wahabis and in Egypt. Italy's wooing of Egypt and Arabia has become unusually pressing since the outbreak of hostilities in Africa. She has not abandoned the hope of inciting these regions to revolt against Great Britain.

Italy is now faced with the thorny problem of ousting Great Britain from Egypt without coming to loggerheads with the Arabian and Mohammedan world, to which Egypt belongs. Whereas Britain has, by bringing strong pressure to bear on the new Egyptian government, already succeeded, in spite of the hesitation of the King, in getting Egyptian troops dispatched to the Libyan front and to the Sudan, and whereas she is turning sentiment in her favor by generously buying up the entire Egyptian cotton crop, Italy, whose friendship for Egypt is

so far finding expression only in the bombardment of Egyptian towns, can do nothing more than continue to appeal to Egypt's "national interests" and—to threaten. For example, the *Messagero* of September 17 (quoted in the Basle *National Zeitung*) stated:

"The Arabian tribes must convert their political tendencies into real action. If, however, Egypt does not want to perform her historic mission towards Islam, destruction awaits her."

It is a fact that at present, at least, the well-armed British troops and the pound sterling are making a greater impression on Egyptian ruling circles than Italy's coaxes and threats.

But Italy's hopes are directed not only towards Egypt; they are also directed towards the whole Arabian world.

It cannot be denied that Great Britain has piled up plenty of inflammable material in Arabia. In the last World War she won the support of the Arabs by dangling before them the prospect of a nationally independent Arabia, and with their help defeated the Turks. But Britain never had the slightest intention of honoring the promises made to the Arabs by the notorious Colonel Lawrence. On the contrary, her secret treaty with France of May 9, 1916, the so-called Sykes-Picot Treaty, provided for the partitioning of Arabia, in which Great Britain was to get the lion's share. The "Greater Arabia" idea was finally shattered by the Versailles treaties. Britain received the man-

date of Palestine and France of Syria, while Transjordan, Iraq and Kuwait were set up as British buffer states. Britain also succeeded in entrenching herself in Southern and Southeastern Arabia (Aden, Hadramaut and Oman).

Throughout the post-war period Britain took advantage of dynastic and religious dissensions in Arabia (between the Sunnites and Shiites) to stir up strife among the Arabs. The British imperialists set up one of the sons of Sherif Hussein of Mecca, the famous Feisal, who with Colonel Lawrence had led the Arabian warriors against the Turks in the World War, as king of Iraq, while Hussein's other son, Abdullah, they made Emir of Transjordan, chiefly as a counterweight to Ibn Saud, the ruler of Central Arabia. For Ibn Saud, who, as leader of the puritanical Wahabi movement, had in 1924 conquered the Hejaz, the kingdom of Sherif Hussein, and in 1926 had become the ruler of the whole of Inner Arabia, was beginning to become a menace to Britain because of his Greater Arabian aspirations.

Ibn Saud has been particularly strenuously wooed by Italy since the Ethiopian war. The Italian imperialists have built mosques and numerous Koran schools in Libya, where they have also founded an Arabian university; they have placed transport ships at the disposal of the Mohammedans gratis for the pilgrim traffic to Mecca; they have even gone so far as to forbid Catholic missionary activities among the Mohammedans in all the Italian colonies—all this in order to

pose in the eyes of Ibn Saud and of the entire Mussulman world as the benevolent protectors of Islam.

In his fight for independence against Britain, Ibn Saud has been skilful in exploiting not only the interests of American, and even of Japanese, imperialism, but, above all, the interests of the Italian imperialists and their German imperialist allies. Thus, in reply to England's alliance with Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Iraq, later joined by Kuwait, formed a defensive alliance in 1939 under the benevolent auspices of Italy. Italy promised to secure the Arabians their national independence—at the hands of no less a person than General Graziani, the Graziani who had once suppressed the insurrectionary Arabian tribes of Libya by fire and sword.

Germany and Italy are trying to persuade the Arabs that it is to their common interest to put an end to British supremacy in the Near East. But so far the Arabs have not been particularly responsive to their arguments. Germany's war on the Hereros, in which this people was almost entirely exterminated, as well as Italy's numerous punitive expeditions against the native populations of Libya and Ethiopia are still fresh in the memory of the Orient.

Equally fresh is the memory of the infamous methods of so-called "peaceful penetration" employed by Britain and France in Africa, the effect of which has been to subjugate and exterminate whole peoples. The exploits of the British "civilizers" in the wars on the

Mahdis in the Sudan in the years 1883-98 and the gruesome massacres at Omdurman and Khartoum, by which the bloodstained Kitchener crushed the Mahdi revolts, have not been forgotten in Africa. Nor have the deeds of the French General Lyautey against the Moroccans in 1911-14, and especially the unparalleled ferocity with which the heroic and desperate revolt of the Riff Kabyles under Abd-el-Krim was put down in 1925-26. Unforgotten too is the fifty-hour bombardment of Damascus by the French General Sarraill and the sanguinary punitive expeditions against the insurgent Druses in Syria in 1925-27.

The appearance of jackals and hyenas to snatch a share of the booty when big beasts of prey fall out is no less familiar to the peoples of Africa. This downright hyena policy has been pursued in particular by Spain, which, for the rest, was not outdone by the big imperialist powers in the brutality of her treatment of the natives.

The imperialist powers are endeavoring in this imperialist war to exploit the aspirations for freedom of the native peoples as a weapon against their rivals. While Italy is speculating on a revolt of the Arabs, Britain is again endeavoring by wiles and concessions, her traditional methods, to neutralize Arabian nationalism, efforts in which the British agents Philby, who, as adviser to Ibn Saud, even became a convert to Islam, Major Clubb and Gertrude Bell, a figure of no mean notoriety in the Near

East, are proving themselves worthy successors of Colonel Lawrence.

Italy's hopes of an Arabian revolt, of a "holy war" against Great Britain have so far not materialized. On the other hand, the "holy war," proclaimed against Italy by the Mufti of Egypt at the behest of the British, has met with little response. Evidently, the Arabs are profoundly skeptical of such "holy wars" in the interests of one or another imperialist group.

Lenin once said in reference to the attempts of the imperialists to make capital out of the national and religious dissensions of the oppressed colonial peoples:

"The age-old oppression of colonial and weak nationalities by the imperialist powers has not only filled the working masses of the oppressed countries with animosity towards the oppressing nations but also with distrust of them in general." (V. I. Lenin, "Preliminary Draft of Theses on the National and Colonial Questions." *Collected Works*, Vol. XXV.)

Italy is waging the war in Africa on three fronts, of which the Libyan and the Sudan fronts aim directly at the principal strategical objective, Egypt, while the purpose of the troops operating in Kenya is to tie up and split the British forces. But whereas the Libyan front can be directly supplied with munitions and reinforcements, the armies operating in the Sudan and Kenya, which are completely cut off from Italy, must either be maintained on accumulated war stocks or be supplied by air.

So long as the Italian army operating from Ethiopia and Eritrea

does not force its way through the Sudan and at least cut the Cairo-Khartoum line, Libya is to be regarded as the central Italian front in Africa. The unusual feature about the offensive against Egypt from Libya is that, contrary to all strategical principles and historical traditions, it is being conducted from the West. Italy lacks an adequate fleet for an offensive from the Nile delta, and adequate support bases in Asia Minor for an offensive from the East.

The Italian army concentrated in Libya is estimated at five hundred thousand men, supplied with about one thousand tanks and as many airplanes. While Graziani, whom after the Ethiopia campaign Mussolini christened the "strategist of astronomical distances," unquestionably possesses considerable experience in desert fighting and, to judge by all appearances, will attempt an attack from the South through the waterless desert, such an undertaking would, to say the least, be very hazardous and the issue problematical. One finds frequent statements in the Italian press to the effect that England is a well-armed and very formidable enemy. For instance, Virginio Gayda, writing in the *Giornale d'Italia* on September 10, says:

"The war will be a long and difficult one. The British world empire is at stake. Rich and well-armed, England has still sufficient means of defending herself."

In contradistinction to Italy, which is trying to avoid naval engagements in the Mediterranean and whose air arm is her chief

weapon, Britain's main strength—apart from her well-fortified positions in Egypt itself—lies in the concentration of naval, air and land forces at the most important naval bases. In addition, her troops stationed on the most important fronts, in the Sudan and in Kenya, have the advantage of possessing good lines of communication, which cannot be said of the Italians. Moreover, in the African theater of war Great Britain possesses a big air fleet, estimated at about 1,300 craft, of which 600 or 700 are concentrated in Egypt alone.

The focal points of Britain's far-flung system of defense are Egypt and the Suez Canal.

Fully cognizant of the menace to the very existence of the British Empire that either a landing of German troops in the British Isles or the conquest of Egypt by Italy would entail, Great Britain has concentrated her most powerful forces at these two most seriously threatened points. Considerably improved as the strategical position of the Axis Powers undoubtedly was by the defeat of France, Germany and Italy have not yet succeeded in seriously threatening Britain's position in these strongest centers of her resistance. As the so-called *blitzkrieg* becomes more and more a war of material, a war of attrition, the problem of land and naval forces assumes greater and greater prominence.

The British navy, in spite of the losses it has so far suffered, still remains the mistress of the seas, or at least of the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean. The navy continues

to play a predominant part in the resistance to Germany's and Italy's far-reaching plans in Europe and Africa.

An attack by Italy or Germany on Egypt therefore involves not only operations by land from Libya or the Sudan, but also, in its broadest sense, the mastery of the Mediterranean, especially of the Eastern Mediterranean. As the hopes of an Arab revolt in Britain's rear have not materialized, her opponents have begun to attack her position on the Suez Canal by turning the other arm of the pincers against Greece, where Britain possesses excellent naval bases.

Italy is moreover vitally interested in a solution of the Syrian problem. She is carrying on intense activities among the Syrian Arabs and is at the same time categorically demanding the complete demobilization of the French forces in Syria and the delivery and destruction of French war material.

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The focal point of the present war in Africa, apart from Egypt and the Arabian countries, is the French colonies. And intense struggle between Germany and Italy on the one hand, and Great Britain, on the other, for these colonies is going on openly, and even more so behind the scenes. Hence the equivocal attitude of Germany and the cautious maneuverings of Great Britain with regard to the Vichy government, which in France itself stands on very shaky ground, it is true, but which in the colonies, and especially in the African colonies,

still represent a factor with which both the belligerent parties in Africa have to reckon. Hence, especially Italy's nervousness with regard to the French troops both in Africa and in Syria which have not yet been disarmed and which, under certain circumstances, might go over to de Gaulle, that is, to England, and thus exercise a very considerable influence on the further course of the war.

The events in the French colonies during the past few months, especially in French Equatorial Africa, in Dakar and in the Belgian Congo, and above all the agreements concluded by Germany with the Vichy government, are clear evidence of the fact that the French African colonies are playing an important part in the imperialist contest for Africa.

Another reason why French Equatorial Africa is so important to the Axis Powers is that it affords a broad and direct territorial connection both with Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and with Italian Libya. The fight for French Equatorial Africa is, therefore, an integral part of the far-flung struggle of the Axis Powers in Africa and for Africa. A prominent part in their plans is played by the excellent motor road through the Sahara Desert, connecting French Morocco with French Equatorial Africa, as well as by the well-equipped air fields in Timbuctoo, Dakar and the Kauar Oasis. Of no less importance is the fact that French Equatorial Africa offers an absolutely secure source of food supply for any army operating independently in that territory.

However, the realization of these grandiose plans is fraught with immense topographical, climatic and technical difficulties, especially as regards the transport of men and material, which is such a supreme problem in a war in Africa. On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that—apart from the fact that her sea communications are still substantially intact—of the total of 60,000 kilometers of railway in Africa, Britain alone possesses 40,000 kilometers—a fact which is bound to weigh heavily in the scales.

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The imperialist war in Africa raises a number of problems, on the solution of which the issue of the war in favor of one or other of the belligerent parties will largely depend. While Germany and Italy are obliged to force the war and to fling their strong land armies, which have not yet been properly brought into action, into the scales, Britain's tactics are just the opposite, namely, with the support of her strong navy and the powerful resources of the British Empire and the United States, to maintain a vigorous defense of her most important centers of resistance and thus keep the enemy at bay and wear him down. Britain's chief allies in this mighty struggle against her imperialist rivals are the sea and the desert.

On the other hand, Africa offers the Axis Powers a good opportunity of breaking through the naval ring that separates them from the colonies and colonial raw materials. As

they themselves point out, Africa is for them a jumping-off ground in their fight against the British Empire for a redivision of colonies. German imperialism, it is true, has subjugated half of Europe by force of arms, but colonies continue to be for it the decisive problem. The imperialist war is therefore tending to shift more and more to Africa.

But the war in Africa not only demands enormous measures of preparation, maintenance and protection (construction of roads and supply of munitions, gasoline, water and food); it will also be a hard, stubborn and extremely protracted war, with many a surprise in store.

One of the many unknowns in the imperialist reckonings of both the belligerent parties is the behavior of the peoples of Africa, whom the imperialists are accustomed to use as pawns and to regard simply as objects of their sinister schemes. While Italy, for example, is trying to incite the Egyptians and Arabs to revolt against England and is promising them national freedom, she is keeping the Arabs of Libya, the natives of Eritrea and Somaliland, and, above all, the people of Ethiopia, in bloody subjection. Or else she dangles the promise of "equality" before the natives, calling them Italian citizens, in order to send them under this title to the various fronts in Africa.

On the other hand, the Egyptians and Arabian peoples are not finding the British yoke any milder. While Britain systematically fomented dissension and confusion in their ranks and employs every means to frus-

trate the idea of pan-Arabian unity, and is keeping Haillé Selassie ready Ethiopia's aspirations for freedom and is keeping Haillé Selasse ready at the gates of that country in order with his help to rouse the native tribes against Italy. In this war, as in the World War, Britain is getting the colonial peoples to fight for her. While the British army in Egypt consists principally of Indians, in Kenya and the Sudan it is largely colored troops from Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa that are fighting.

But in the British dominion of South Africa the situation is very tense. The entry of the Union of South Africa into the war (on September 8, 1939), was the signal for the outbreak of internal political conflicts which have since been waged chiefly between the supporters of the British Empire, headed by General Smuts, the present Prime Minister, and the national Afrikanders (Boers), headed by Dr. Malans and General J. B. M. Hertzog, the ex-Prime Minister. How tense the situation is, is shown by the fact that a motion by General Hertzog for a separate peace with the Axis Powers was rejected by a majority of eighteen votes.

For the native Afrikanders, the present world war, like the last World War, is a political education and a school of political activity. The Arabian countries of Asia Minor and North Africa, the natives of Egypt, Libya, Tunis, Algiers and Morocco, the people of Ethiopia and the numberless Negro tribes of Central and South Africa are beginning to awaken to political life

and are impatiently awaiting the day of their liberation from all exploitation and oppression.

Imperialist rivalries in Africa have helped immensely to further and strengthen the national consciousness of the African people. While the immediate political effects of this national awakening are not as spectacular as they are in India and China, the signs of a growing awareness of the common destiny of all the African peoples, irrespective of religion or color, are unmistakable.

This sense of political solidarity among the African peoples was impressively revealed during the revolt of the Riff Kabyles and the Druses, but especially during the war in Ethiopia, when not only the Arab and Berber peoples of North Africa, but also the Negroes of Equatorial and South Africa proclaimed their solidarity with the struggle for liberation of the Ethiopian people. In this present war, there are many Arabians who are of the opinion that the peoples of Africa should take advantage of the struggle for hegemony of the imperialist powers to achieve their own national and political independence.

The political prestige of the white bosses in Africa, already severely shaken in the first imperialist war, when the peoples of Africa and Arabia were drawn into the imperialist slaughter, has suffered another severe shock in the present war in connection with the attempts of the white bosses to convert the native peoples into cannon fodder. The African peoples are beginning to see through the lies and political

deceit of the various imperialist groups, and are becoming more and more sceptical of the promises of the imperialists to grant them national freedom and independence in the event of their victory:

"It was formerly the 'accepted idea' that the world has been divided from time immemorial into inferior and superior races, into black peoples and white peoples, the former of which are unfit for civilization and are doomed to be objects of exploitation, while the latter are the sole vehicles of civilization, whose mission it is to exploit the former. This legend must now be regarded as shattered and discarded. . . .

"The era of undisturbed exploitation and oppression of the colonies and dependent countries is over." (Joseph Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, pp. 254-55.)

So long as the native population of Africa submits to being an object in the criminal game of the imperialist powers and a source of strength for imperialism, the imperialists will never let go of their booty. There is only one way of liberating the "dark continent" from the rule of the white bosses, and that is a revolutionary struggle of the native peoples against imperialism.

"The revolutionary struggle of the oppressed peoples in the dependent and colonial countries against imperialism is the only road that leads to their emancipation from oppression and exploitation." (Joseph Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. I, pp. 68-69.)

THE SHADOW OF THE IMPERIALIST WAR SPREADS
OVER AUSTRALIA

BUT THE BRAVE WORKING CLASS AS ALWAYS IS STANDING
FIRM AND GOING FORWARD!

By J. R. MITCHELL

THE information given by the British newspapers concerning the last federal election in Australia of September 21 is really strange. The results which are given in London by the newspapers and broadcasting stations change day by day! Early in the morning of September 23, the world was told the Federal Government had

a majority of seven votes, i.e., a little smaller than the majority of ten votes it had before; but a few days later the British Broadcasting Corporation and the newspapers recognized that the Government majority was less.

The most recent information published in London gave the following picture:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

	Deputies		
	Federal Elections October 23, 1937	Situation Before Election	Federal Elections September 21, 1940
United Australian			
Party	26	25	24
Country Party	15	17	14
Independent	2	0	0
Labor Party (including			
Lang Party)	31	32	36
Total	74	74	74

SENATE

	Deputies	
	Federal Elections October 23, 1937	Federal Elections September 21, 1940
United Australian		
Party	} 20	16
Country Party		3
Labor Party	16	17

Both Government parties—the United Australian Party (U.A.P.), the party of big finance capital, and the Country Party, the party of the big landowners—lost in influence. This is a continuation of the decline which already was seen in the war by-elections in Upper Hunter, Coria, etc., as well as in the Victoria state elections. It proved the growing opposition of the Australian working class, and with it, the farmers and toiling masses of Australia, to the policy of the Menzies-Cameron government, which has brought the shadow of the imperialist war over the soil of Australia. It proves the opposition of the Australian working people to the growing attacks on civil rights and the living conditions of the working class.

In spite of the fact that the Federal Labor Party also supports this war and the main measures of the Government against the working class and the toiling masses of Australia, the Labor Party was obliged to oppose a few of the decisions of the Federal Government, as for example, the sending of soldiers overseas. It was also obliged to speak against "many wartime boards and commissions created by Prime Minister Menzies and dominated by representatives of undertakings whose chief concern had been to make profits and resist the improvement of employed working conditions." (Mr. Curtin, Labor Party leader, in his nationwide broadcast of August 28.)

The setback to the coalition government majority revealed the opposition sentiments of the toilers

and above all of the working class, organized into trade unions, opposition sentiments expressed by the big strikes such as that of the New South Wales miners. This opposition is so strong that it has found expression inside the Labor Party and has succeeded in winning the majority of the Labor Party of New South Wales, the most industrial state of Australia.

Australia, the Imperialist Center of the City in the South Pacific.

Coming Under the Heel of Wall Street

The workers and farmers see with every passing day that the imperialist war is coming closer to the shores of Australia. The war is no longer confined to Europe and Northern Africa in the West, and to central China in the East. The repeated demands of Japan on Indo-China, supported by military, air and naval forces, their threats to Singapore—the Far Eastern Gibraltar—their pre-war infiltration into the Philippines, the Netherlands East Indies and British New Guinea (Australian colony) show the growing danger. The designs of the Japanese military gang on the Australian Commonwealth itself, *i.e.*, on its territory in the South Seas and rich raw materials—wool, iron ore, coal, etc.—therefore spreads the shadow of the imperialist war over the soil of Australia.

And the workers and farmers understand very well that this is the result of the imperialist war policy of Australia's rulers, the men of the City of London, of such corporations as Broken Hill Prop-

erties and other big trusts and banks. They understand that the policy of the Menzies-Cameron government is exactly like that of Chamberlain, and later of the Chamberlain-Halifax-Churchill government. These agents of British imperialism fought bitterly against any effective help to the Chinese people; they participated in all British combinations against the only genuine, peaceful country in the world—against the great socialist Soviet Union. The Menzies-Cameron government was and is the most loyal follower of the City. It declared its support of British imperialism immediately after the outbreak of the war, even without asking the opinion of Parliament.

Today it is defending the interests of British imperialism in the South Seas under the pretext, as the Australian ambassador in Washington, Richard G. Casey, declared: "of an increasing contribution to make to the economic development of the Pacific area." It is directly influencing the "Socialist" government of New Zealand. It annexed New Guinea; it is "helping" the former French colonies, such as Tahiti, Loyalty and other Society Islands of the South Seas and, above all, the strategic New Hebrides and New Caledonia. This help is not given to the native people or French working men, seamen, etc., but to such corporations as the *La Societe le Nickel* in New Caledonia, which is owned mainly by Mr. Rothschild. In fact, the Menzies-Cameron government acts as a good agent of the City of London in ruling over these countries and peoples.

With the same aim in view it is leaning on the United States, and sent Casey (the man who was the first in the League of Nations to give up sanctions) to Washington; he is there negotiating conciliation treaties with the U.S.A., advocating a defense pact similar to the pact which was concluded between the U.S.A. and Canada; participating in negotiations about Singapore, and other military questions concerning the South Pacific.

But the price that must be paid for this "protection" will not be peace and security for the Australian people, but war on the South Seas and even over Australian soil. It will not be a better situation for the workers and toiling masses, but a much heavier yoke of imperialist oppression and exploitation from the imperialist powers, both British and American.

At the end of 1939, already, United States Senator Sheridan Downey (California) declared that the Monroe Doctrine should cover Australia and New Zealand. Sydney Walton, writing in the American magazine *Forum*, visualizes a new "frontier" for the U.S.A. which would include Australia and New Zealand, "a geographical chain for over six thousand miles north and south, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Samoa, Hawaii and the U.S.A."*

The U.S.A. has rapidly intensified its activities in Australia during this war, definitely planning to take over the inheritance of Great Britain in the Pacific. *The New*

* *The Communist Review*, theoretical organ of the Communist Party of Australia, December, 1939, p. 709.

York Times, which of late shows a tremendous "interest" in Australia, wrote:

"It would obviously be folly for Australia to commit suicide as a nation by going along with Britain in the Far East to the point where she would be involved in a possible British collapse in that area. The problem is how to escape such a fate; and a difficult problem it is." (June 7, 1940.)

Since August the passenger planes of the Pan-American Airways have been taking off twice a week from San Francisco for Sydney via Hawaii-Samoa and New Zealand, making the trip in four and a half days. Australia is more and more coming under the grip of American imperialism.

The predictions of the Communists that the present imperialist war would become a world war have proved correct. The march of events has exposed the imperialists in Australia, who, like Federal Treasurer Spender, said "there is no reason why the Pacific countries should become directly involved" because "those countries have not . . . any conflict of interests that cannot be solved." (*Sydney Morning Herald*, May 5, 1940.) It also revealed the full bankruptcy of all "theories" which were circulated, not only by the Australian bourgeoisie, but also by their "Labor" men such as Mr. Lang, who, on this basis, fought collective security, and, above all, the sending of help to the Chinese people and opposed trade and friendly political relations with the U.S.S.R.

Menzies' Policy: Put Away the Dreams of Greater Social Security, More Prosperity, Less Work and More Pay, Peace and Quietness

It is clear from the British Broadcasting Corporation and the papers that the first information given on the Australian Federal elections caused some uneasiness in the City. The deliberately confusing explanations given show their fear that the English workers would see the strength of the Australian working class movement against the imperialist war and for bread and liberty. Nevertheless, what is happening now in our country is very clear. Australia now possesses a fairly large industry, which is growing and will grow much more. The first imperialist war created and developed heavy industry. The first steel plant of the Broken Hill Properties was opened only in 1915. Today the war has obliged British imperialism to build, in addition to heavy industry, an important war industry.

Harold Callender, an American journalist, described it in the following way:

"Probably few visitors to Australia would expect to be shown first of all modern steel works or to be told that Australia produces 12 per cent as much steel as Britain. But this war, like the last one, is forcing this great sheep-raising and wheat-growing continent to become as industrially self-sufficient as possible, and the steel plant, opened in 1915, is being expanded, since now it supplies most of Australian needs

for industry and defense." (*The New York Times*, August 20, 1940.)

The Broken Hill Properties increased its capital last December from £15,000,000 to £25,000,000. Hundreds and thousands of pounds are being invested to enlarge war factories and to build new ones. Every kind of armament, beginning with the production of cartridges, bombs, shells, primers, etc., up to the production of machine-guns, anti-aircraft guns, armored cars and airplanes is in full speed. Local defense vessels are built in Australian shipyards.

"We can make almost anything up to a battleship," proudly declared Essington Lewis, managing director of the Broken Hill Properties who is the principal industrialist in Australia and the Director General of Munitions. (*The New York Times*, August 20, 1940.)

Australia is supplying ammunition and armaments not only for its own defense, but for New Zealand, for the British colonies in the East and for Britain. "British destroyers are fighting U-boats in the North Sea with depth charges made in Australian factories, and Australian-made bombs will soon fall on German targets," stated the *Daily Telegraph* and *Morning Post* of June 10.

As a consequence of this industrialization the working class is growing in numbers and in concentration. In the war industries alone about one hundred fifty thousand workers are now employed. The Director General of Munitions, Essington Lewis, declared "this figure is increasing and we will have

to call for more men." Especially great demands are made by the aviation industry, which, in the coming year will employ ten thousand men. An acute shortage of skilled workers in the trades is developing—of toolmakers, fitters, turners, forgers, electrical mechanics, etc.

But this growth of total employment does not keep pace with the growth of industry. Employment increased only from 831,555 in June, 1939, to 856,446 in June, 1940. (*Sydney Morning Herald*, June 27, 1940.) There are still full possibilities for quickly increasing the number of workers. There are still about one hundred thousand unemployed, mostly unskilled workers.

What are the conditions of the Australian working class?

This unemployment shows that the war has not improved the situation of these workers. As in England, the U.S.A. and other countries, the war is making the wealthy wealthier and the poor poorer.

G. J. M. Best, General Manager of the Prudential Assurance Co., Ltd., in Australia and New Zealand, declared one year ago:

"Whatever our job, it must not only be 'business as usual' [Mr. Menzies' slogan], but business more than usual. . . . Australia is on the eve of stability and greater prosperity. . . . Business men are confident of the future and see ahead boom conditions. . . . Australia faces the busiest period in her history." (Quoted in *The Communist Review*, 1939, p. 705.)

He expressed the innermost desires of the owners of the Broken

Hill Properties, and all other financial sharks in Australia, and disclosed who wants the war. He had good cause for such optimism.

The balance sheets of 63 companies, issued since the beginning of the war, revealed an increase of 2.6 per cent in net profits, and of 6.4 per cent in dividends. (*Common Cause* [miners' newspaper], April 4, 1940.) This is only a small part of the profits which the big shareholders received after the deduction of salaries for directors, of bonuses for the board of directors, etc. The Broken Hill Properties, for example, paid to its shareholders for the last half year not only a dividend of 7½ per cent, but made them a present of an additional 64 shares without payment for each 100 shares they hold. The face value of this gift is £4,500,000, but every £1 share is sold at the stock exchange for £2½. Mr. Best's optimism was justified.

More! The Prime Minister, Mr. Menzies, dared to say:

"For the time being we must put our dreams away—our dreams of greater social security, of more prosperity, of less work and more pay, of peace and quietness. Some day we will dream once more of these things, and our dreams will come true, but at this solemn hour action is what counts. Sacrifice—all-around sacrifice—unremitting toil, unflinching devotion—these are the things which we must have." (*Sydney Morning Herald*, June 17, 1940.)

He disclosed only what was already being accomplished in fact since the beginning of the war by the Australian rulers. The Govern-

ment has already sent over twenty thousand Australians overseas and over forty thousand men of the Australian Imperial Forces are in camps waiting to be transported overseas. The permanent home forces, militia and garrison battalions were increased from 28,000 in 1935 to nearly 95,000, and the Government is planning to increase the Australian army to 300,000 men by March, 1941. The Government is shifting onto the masses the burden of £150,000,000 for the war during the budget year of 1940-41.

The palliative official statistics stated that wages in secondary industry increased during the year July, 1939-June, 1940, from £102,078,550 to £106,743,072. So, taking into consideration the greater number of employed workers, average wages and salaries per worker in secondary industry declined from £204 in 1938-39 to £189 in 1939-40. Nominal wages declined by 8 per cent despite longer working hours, more work, etc.

But more than that:

D. B. Copland, Controller of Prices, who was addressing a meeting of the Housewives' Association, brazenly claimed that retail prices during the war year since August last year increased by only 2.9 per cent. This statement was immediately exposed by Mrs. E. W. Waddy from Glenelg, in South Australia, who stated there was a 100 per cent increase in the price of shin beef, pie meat and sausages. (*Sydney Morning Herald*, Feb. 6, 1940.)

Senator Collings, leader of the Labor Party Opposition, declared in

Parliament that since August 31 of last year prices for potatoes had increased from 1½d. to 2½d. per pound, for bacon shoulders from 11½d. to 1s. 4d. per pound, for lamb chops from 10d. to 1s. 3d. per pound, for veal cutlets from 7½d. to 9½d., for porterhouse steak from 10d. to 1s. 2d. per pound, for tea from 1s. 11½d. to 2s. 5d. per pound, for fruit and vegetables, by about 3d. in every shilling, for clothing, boots and shoes by an average of 20 per cent. (*Tribune*, April 30, 1940.) Workers' housewives can rightly claim that the prices of all goods of mass consumption increased during the first eight months of the year of the war by no less than 25 per cent, which caused a corresponding reduction in the living standard of the working class.

Taxes increased to such a degree that the Government is already obliged to raise the bigger part of war expenditure, not by taxation, but by loans.

The condition of the great masses of farmers—till now the main productive force in Australia—is also growing worse. This is seen in increasing taxes, customs for industrial goods, etc., great export difficulties for its main products, wheat, wool, sugar, etc., as a result of loss of a number of markets, which has increased their dependence on British imperialism. There has been a big rise in world wheat prices since the war began, but the outlook for the Australian wheat growers is far from satisfactory: the total quantity of last season's wheat still to be shipped amounts to 124,000,000 bushels, and it is estimated that

there will be an unexported carry-over of 60,000,000 bushels when next season's wheat is harvested.

The Federal Government is urging growers to restrict their production in the 1940-41 harvest. Mr. Cameron declared that the Federal Government will consider a plan whereby some of the wheat storage on each farm would be cut for hay instead of grain. An abnormal strain on storage facilities next year and the danger of mice and weevil plagues is predicted. (*Sydney Morning Herald*, May 5, 1940.) And now the latest reports of a possible severe drought can only further complicate the present difficult situation and intensify the suffering of the farming masses.

The democratic rights and liberties of which the Australian workers and the Australian people have been so proud are being destroyed day by day. Menzies' declaration: "The right of free speech will be jealously guarded by the Government" was uttered exactly at the moment in which it was to be suppressed! The Government concentrated dictatorial powers in its hands. It tried to postpone the Federal election that was due until after the end of the war. It prohibited anti-war and anti-conscription meetings and demonstrations. It launched a vicious campaign against every oppositional paper, strictly censored them, and introduced a severe censorship under the Director General of Information, Kieth Murdock, which is directed, in the first place, against the militant working class press. It outlawed a number of papers and

magazines, including the central organ of the Communist Party, *The Tribune*, the State Communist Party papers—the *Guardian*, *North Queensland Guardian*, the *Workers' Star*, and *The Communist Review*—the theoretical magazine of the Party, etc. It disrupted meetings of the Communist Party, prohibited the meetings of the Youth Parliament in Melbourne to which forty-five organizations had appointed delegates to discuss protest measures against the Government's policy; and, finally, outlawed the Communist Party, the Australian Youth Council, and other democratic organizations. Such is the way in which Menzies "jealously guarded" the right of free speech!

The Australian Working Class: Its Struggles for Bread, Freedom and Security

The suppression of democratic rights goes to show how deep is the opposition of the working class movement to the war policy of the Federal Government. The Australian bourgeoisie and its Menzies-Cameron government have to deal with a working class, and with toilers who have long traditions of struggle for the defense of their daily demands and needs, for their democratic rights and liberties, and against the imperialist war. These traditions are rooted in the famous Eureka Stockade, the armed uprising of the gold miners in Ballarat in 1854 which was highly estimated by Marx and Engels; in the many strikes in Broken Hill Properties since the years 1890 and 1892; above all, in the big anti-

conscription movement and strikes during the first imperialist war, in the grand revolutionary movement of the first post-war years.

Among the Australian workers there exists a very old and powerful fighting tradition; they know that their whole general situation, their civil rights, depend on the organization and power of their own movement, which is very different from that of the Laborite-reformist spirit of England. In Australia some 70-80 per cent of the workers are members of militant trade unions, which are much more like the new American C.I.O. unions than that of the English unions. Since the second imperialist war began numerous strikes for the defense of the living standard have broken out, such as the strikes of the miners and steel workers, of the railway workers, seamen, meat workers, car workers, milk roundmen, etc.

The general strike of 25,000 coal miners, the biggest strike to take place in a belligerent country during this war, lasted for two months (March-April, 1940). It received broad support throughout the whole country. In Newcastle, the center of the largest Australian coal mining area, the Prime Minister saw his meeting entirely boycotted by three thousand miners, and he was obliged to beg the miners to listen to him at their own meeting, where he was constantly heckled, and forced to listen publicly to bitter speeches against him and his Government.

This old militant spirit of the Australian workers is the reason why the trade unions, representing

over 650,000 workers, took up a position against the imperialist war, why no party in Australia up to date dared openly to favor conscription. This is why the New South Wales Labor Party Conference in March of this year, under the pressure of these workers and trade unionists, adopted a resolution for the defense of immediate demands and against the imperialist war, as well as a "Hands Off Russia" resolution, against the wishes of the Labor Party Executive.

The latest Federal elections show the growing activity of the working class movement. First the workers and the toilers forced the Government against its will to hold the elections. The Federal Government wanted to postpone the elections and in this it was supported by the British Government. This was the first step for the suppression of all elections. In June, 1940, the local government elections of New South Wales were postponed until twelve months after the end of the war.

The Communists and militant anti-war working class movement raised the slogan: "There must be elections!" *Common Cause*, the official organ of the Miners' Federation of Australia (Sydney), wrote:

"Section 28 of the Commonwealth Constitution provides: 'Every House of Representatives shall continue for three years from the first meeting of the House, and no longer. . . . Parliament cannot be extended . . . unless the people sanction by referendum an alteration in the Constitution. . . . Any proposed amendment by the amending of the Constitution Act by the Imperial Parliament would

raise grave objections. . . . Saturday, January 25, 1941, is the last day upon which the present Parliament has legal status; a general election must be held before or on that date.'" (June 29, 1940.)

The majority of trade unionists supported this position. The protest was so big that the reactionary leadership of the Labor Party also was forced to protest against the postponement of the elections. But in order to allow the Government to maneuver, it declared it would agree with this Government's proposal only on the basis of a referendum. Disagreement within the Country Party—among the toiling farmers—developed around this question.

Forced to retreat, the Government rushed matters: It dissolved Parliament on August 29 and appointed the election date for September 21. Owing to the size of Australia—a full continent—and the difficulties of communication, owing to the special war laws and decrees, with the legal Communist press suppressed, the militants persecuted and the Communist Party placed in illegality, such a short period of time would give the Communists and militant elements very little time to prepare for the elections.

At the present we don't know the exact tactics of the Australian Communist Party; it could not openly appear on the ballot, but it is definite that the majority of the trade unions and the Communist Party supported the anti-war and militant Labor candidates. This concentration of working class forces succeeded in defeating many Gov-

ernment coalition candidates and considerably increased the number of Labor M.P.'s. Thus, we have the unusual situation in Australia of Labor having virtual equality with the Government coalition.

* * *

The London papers stated that the Prime Minister Menzies, and the Labor Party leader, Mr. Curtin, met and discussed the question of forming a National Government, which Menzies said, "He was willing to set up." But as yet the question is not decided.

The question of the National Government, like that of industrial panels, showed the growing protest movement against the Government policy. At the end of May, Menzies proposed to the Labor Party that they enter the Government where they would get from five to six places, including the Ministry of Labor. The opposition was so great inside the ranks of the trade unions and labor that a special Labor Party Commonwealth Conference was forced to reject this proposal. This, despite the fact that Curtin and the Labor Party leadership have supported the war policy of the Government from the very beginning of the war, that they have been abandoning more and more all partial objections against the Government's war policy, against compulsory military training, against the sending of troops overseas, etc., and that they are, in fact, prepared to collaborate with the Government.

The same mass resistance can be seen on the question of advisory panels. The Government wants the

cooperation of the trade unions. The leadership of the Australian Council of Trade Unions is in favor of participation, and its President, A. F. Monk, Secretary C. Crofts and others have already started negotiations with the Government. But the majority of the workers support the Communists against this and have started a campaign under the slogan: "No cooperation with Menzies!"

At the end of June a conference of the New South Wales Trades and Labor Council was convened which declared, by a vote of 54 to 37, against the labor movement having representation on industrial advisory panels. It also rejected a proposal to make overtures to the Government on the setting up of conciliation committees. The Labor Council of Queensland made a similar decision.

Protests against trade union participation in the panels developed throughout the Commonwealth, and the reactionary leaders of the Australian Council of Trade Unions maneuvered hard in order to get a majority of votes at the National Trade Union Conference which was called for July 3.

Especially strong is the opposition against advisory panels in New South Wales. The Conference of Trades and Labor Council in New South Wales, the first industrial state of Australia, declared:

" . . . that there is no basis for cooperation between the labor movement and the present Federal Government by advisory panels, industrial peace conferences or other means." (*Common Cause*.)

Toward the close of the discussion the very important statement brought forward by the President, J. R. Hughes, was adopted by the Executive:

" . . . The introduction of industrial conscription and dictatorship by Big Business goes hand in hand with the action of the Government in its betrayal of democracy, by declaring illegal the Communist Party, the League for Peace and Democracy and the Minority Movement. The Communist Party which, although many of us do not agree with its policy, has consistently opposed fascism. . . .

"In addition to making our protest on these matters, we must commence immediately organization to mobilize the Australian nation, not only as Menzies had said, 'on a war footing,' but on a footing which will solidly oppose the smashing of our democracy and defeat the Menzies government. Only by prevention of fascism at home can we subdue fascism abroad.

"To this end I recommend that the Civil Liberties Committee undertake the campaign and arrange for protests to the Government and, pending a meeting of this body, a rally be arranged in the Sydney Domain for Sunday week, to which we should rally fifty thousand people to voice their protests against the development towards fascism in Australia." (*Common Cause*, June 29, 1940.)

And without a dissenting voice the conference unequivocally opposed the Government's emergency powers, which are supported by the Labor Party, and inaugurated a campaign against them beginning June 30.

This attitude of the true working class movement against the imperialist war and the imperialist warmongers became the center for rallying all progressive and democratic elements throughout the Commonwealth. The broad wave of protest against the sweeping powers of the Minister of Information over the Australian press illustrates this important process. Dissatisfaction has been growing for a long time among the broadest strata of the population against the strict, undemocratic handling of censorship. It came to an explosion when dictatorial powers over the Australian press were given to the Director of Information on July 12. A vigorous protest by the newspapers throughout Australia was raised, which was supported by many prominent people, including the Prime Minister of Victoria, W. Dunstan, and even by Mr. Curtin.

The Prime Minister Menzies was again forced to retreat and declared on July 19:

"That as the wording of the regulations controlling the press went considerably further than the Government had intended, they would be redrafted."

*Real Trade Unionists and Laborites
Together with the Communists
in the Fight*

It is clear that in the present situation, when the shadow of the imperialist war is daily drawing nearer to the South Seas and Australia, the City has to do everything to set up a National Government in Australia, and the Labor leader-

ship has already prepared everything for this eventuality.

In June the paper of big finance capital, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, openly declared:

"There is not a single principle in Labor's war program which cannot be subscribed to wholeheartedly by every loyal Australian." (June 6, 1940.)

At the special Australian Labor Party Commonwealth Conference of July 19 a resolution was adopted in which the Labor Party abandoned its long-standing opposition to compulsory military training, and endorsed Curtin's support of the air plans and reinforcement of the Australian Imperial Forces.

But the attitude of the majority of the Australian trade unionists has caused big repercussions inside the Labor Party. This was manifested sharply at the Easter Conference of the New South Wales Labor Party, when the conference adopted a strong resolution for the defense of the immediate needs of the masses, against the war, and in favor of the Soviet Union, in spite of the protest by the Federal Executive of the Australian Labor Party against these decisions. At the special Australian Labor Party Commonwealth Conference the fight continued. There, the opposition to the war policy was represented mainly by the New South Wales Labor Party delegation, while the Tasmanian delegation favored Labor Party participation in the Cabinet. The composition of the conference was such as to secure a

majority for the reactionary leadership and its reactionary war policy, but the proposal of the Tasmanian Labor Party to enter the Cabinet was defeated.

After the National Conference the militant rank and file of the Labor movement of New South Wales, who knew the meaning of the events in France and of what happened to the French people, compelled the officials of the New South Wales Labor Party and of the New South Wales Trades and Labor Council to organize a congress for July 7 to discuss plans for opposing any move to introduce conscription for service abroad, to discuss the "attacks on the civil rights of the people" and "*the defense of Australia against internal and external fascist enemies.*" The contradictions between the New South Wales Labor Party and the Federal leadership sharpened, and at the beginning of August the Executive of the New South Wales Labor Party was expelled by the Federal Executive.

The attitude of the former reactionary leadership of the New South Wales Labor Party which created, together with the reactionary Laborite Lang, the New South Wales Labor Party (non-Communist) could not break this big movement despite its screen of Left phrases.

This development of events has proved how deep the roots of the Australian Communist Party are within the working class movement. In the middle of the campaign to outlaw the Party, Federal Attorney-General Hughes was forced to recognize this influence when he stated:

"The number of Communists who are not members of the Communist Party is ten, fifty, a hundred times greater than those who are members. . . . If we were able to establish our case against all or a substantial number of members or leaders, the real trouble remains as it is today: Communism would still control all but one of the great industrial organizations of Australia, and would be in a position to dominate unionism as a whole. That is the crux of the position."

But if we soberly discount the unsolicited exaggerations of this chief policeman in judicial garb, the influence of the Communist Party continues, nevertheless, to be very important.

The raising of the slogan: No co-operation with the Menzies Government, the anti-war position of almost the whole trade union movement, the many resolutions for the defense of democratic rights and liberties, the famous "Hands Off Russia" resolution of the New South Wales Labor Party—all these are results of the tireless work of the Communist Party. No persecutions can stop its work and, therefore, its growth. During the most vicious campaign against the Party, it could proudly report that many workers joined it. As quoted in the *Tribune* of April, 1940, the New South Wales Secretary of the Party said:

"In the last few days a large number of workers have inquired how to join the Party, calling at the office to make their inquiries. Reports from almost every suburb indicate a similar feeling."

An increasing number of work-

ers are defending the Party, because it followed the line of devoted work for their interests. When the central organ of the Party, the *Tribune*, was in financial difficulties due to the growing persecutions, the paper was able to report that the financial support given to it by its followers is increasing. When the Communist press was outlawed, a wave of protests was raised throughout the country: the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the Trade Union Council in New South Wales and Brisbane, the Australian Council of Civil Liberties, the Australian Native organization in Western Australia, numerous branches of the Labor Party, and so on, sharply condemned this violation of democratic rights and liberties in Australia; finally, when the Communist Party was outlawed, again the Australian Council of Trade Unions, and with it many other working class organizations, including many of the Labor Party organizations, especially in New South Wales and also the Labor Party paper, the *Daily News*, raised their voices in protest. These are the reasons why, while the Government outlawed the Party, a whole network of reactionary outfits, such as the "Economic Front," the "Democratic Fronts," the so-called "Anti-Communist Labor Party" of Lang, etc., were created for the purpose of fighting the Communist Party and its influence. The *Tribune* was correct when it wrote:

"The development of the campaign against the Communist Party and the continuous efforts to break it are the best tributes of the Party's

adherence to its principles." (April 26, 1940.)

*The Fine and Courageous Australian
Working Class Calmly Faces
the Future*

In these days when the imperialist war daily comes closer to Australian shores, when the Menzies government, servant both of the City and of Wall Street, helped by the "Labor" leaders, such as Curtin and Lang, strike more and more each day at the Australian workers, Australian toiling farmers and Australian progressive and workers' organizations, we Australians look with faith and calm to the future.

In these dark times we are proud of, and confident in, the fine revolutionary traditions and the courageous stand of the Australian working class and its Communist Party.

Should Messrs. Curtin and Lang enter the National Government today or tomorrow, almost all of the trade unions and a large section of the Labor Party organizations and the rank and file will never accept either cooperation with the present Federal Government or a future Federal National Government, nor will they accept "industrial peace" conferences. Never will they forget the attitude of the English and French "Labor" leaders, such as the Ministers Attlee, Greenwood and Bevin; the fifth columnist Faure, the anti-labor Blum and "syndicalists" such as Reni Belin, this new servant of the most reactionary circles of France, who attack only the revolutionary workers and serve

only the big financiers and imperialists; they attack only the great U.S.S.R. and never the City and the 200 French families. Never will the Australian workers forget that it was these reformist leaders who have thrown the English workers under the heel of growing reaction and the dreadful bombing. The rank and file Laborites will not only continue, but they will intensify their fight against this reactionary policy at home and in the imperialist war.

What is happening in Australia proves that the Australian workers understand that it is better to unite now in the fight for bread, freedom and peace than to do it in concentration camps, as in France and Germany. They all understand that militant trade unions are a most powerful weapon for defending their rights and their lives!

The Australian working class will continue to rally around itself all the Australian farmers and the Australian toilers, who also want bread and liberty at home, and peace and security abroad.

The Australian working class will continue to maintain and further develop its international fighting spirit; as American imperialism daily ties up with the Australian capitalists and rulers, the Australian workers will more and more link their actions with those of the progressive working class movement of the United States, and there is no doubt that the militant working class movement in the U.S.A. will lend its support to its class brothers in Australia.

As the Japanese imperialists

reach out more and more towards the South Seas, the Australian working class will more and more rally around the position of the Australian Congress of Trade Unions which, in April of this year, adopted a *resolution of full support for the Chinese people* in their struggle for national liberation, and urged all unions to assist in every way possible in providing funds, food, medical supplies and other requisites; the Australian working class also will continue to organize and educate to a greater extent the Chinese and Japanese workers living in Australia.

This is the way to keep peace in Australia and ensure security for its people, together with the workers and farmers of New Zealand, with the toiling people and workers of the East Indies, Indo-China and India.

And above all, a big hope in the future is to be found in the old and always deep love which the Australian workers have for the Land

of Socialism, the great Soviet Union. This love for the Soviet Union was once again expressed when the Labor Party conference in New South Wales accepted a resolution calling for the defense of the Soviet Union at the very time when the British and American capitalists and their Australian agents, the Federal Labor leaders included, were developing a most virulent campaign against the Soviet Union in connection with the provocation in Finland, today so clear to all.

And as Australia becomes the big rallying center in the South and Southeast Pacific for the imperialists of the City and Wall Street, the more it becomes the strategic war position for the imperialist dogs' fight in this part of the world, the more—it is clear today—the Australian working class and its fine Communist Party will become that powerful revolutionary rallying force for bread, freedom and peace for all workers and peoples of the South Seas.

CHRISTO KABAKCHIEV

OBITUARY

W E REGRET to announce the death of Christi Kabakchiev, one of the oldest champions of the Communist Party of Bulgaria and of the Communist International, and in recent years a member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Comrade Kabakchiev was born in 1878. A man of no ordinary ability and with an all around Marxist education, for twenty years he was one of the leaders of the Tesniak Party, which later became the Communist Party of Bulgaria. From 1910 to 1923 he edited the *Rabotnicheski Vestnik*, organ of the Bulgarian Communist Party. He was the author of a number of books, pamphlets, etc.

As delegate from the Tesniak Party, he attended the International Congresses in Stuttgart (1907) and in Copenhagen (1910). At the International Congress in Basle (1912) he opposed the reformists and imperialist war.

During the first imperialist war, Comrade Kabakchiev was an internationalist, fought the social patriots, and unhesitatingly joined the Bolsheviks and the Third, Communist International.

In 1920 he crossed the Black Sea in a fisherman's boat in order to attend the Second Congress of the Communist International as a delegate from the Bulgarian Com-

munist Party. At this Congress he made a report on the rules of the Communist International.

In January, 1921, as representative of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, he spoke at the congress of the Italian Socialist Party in Livorno, where the split took place, and took part in the formation of the Communist Party of Italy.

Comrade Kabakchiev was also a delegate at the Third, Fourth and Sixth Congresses of the Communist International. At the Fifth Congress he was elected a member of the International Control Commission.

Arrested in Bulgaria in 1923, he courageously defended the revolutionary tactics of the Communist Party of Bulgaria and of the Communist International in court.

Since 1926 he has lived in the U.S.S.R.

During the last years of his life, Comrade Kabakchiev worked in the Historical Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. on the history of Bulgaria and of the Communist Party of Bulgaria.

Death has torn from our ranks an old and tried champion of communism, a staunch and honest representative of the old generation of Bulgarian revolutionary Communists.

Christo Kabakchiev will live long in the memory of the working people.

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